Boy in His Arms

Posted originally on the Archive of Our Own at http://archiveofourown.org/works/40688169.

Rating:
Teen And Up Audiences

Archive Warning:
No Archive Warnings Apply

Category:
M/M

Fandom:
Harry Potter - J. K. Rowling

Relationships:
Draco Malfoy/Harry Potter, Lucius Malfoy/Narcissa Black Malfoy, Sirius Black/Remus Lupin

Characters:
Draco Malfoy, Harry Potter, Original Goblin Character(s), Narcissa Black Malfoy, Lucius Malfoy, Sirius Black, Remus Lupin, Blaise Zabini

Additional Tags:
Creature Inheritance, Mates, Fluff and Angst, Kinda, Water Nymph Draco Malfoy, Creature Draco Malfoy, Dark elf harry potter, Creature Harry Potter, Dominant Creature Harry Potter, Submissive Creature Draco Malfoy, those should be tags, Fluff, Alternate Universe - Canon Divergence, Supportive Narcissa Black Malfoy, Supportive Lucius Malfoy, Albus Dumbledore Bashing, Manipulative Albus Dumbledore, Harry Potter is Lord Potter, Harry Potter is Lord Peverell, Harry Potter is the Heir to the House of Black, Harry Potter is the Heir to the House of Slytherin, Blaise Zabini is a Good Friend, Draco Malfoy & Blaise Zabini Friendship, Sane Voldemort (Harry Potter), Harry Potter is Lord of Multiple Noble Houses, Good Parent Lucius Malfoy, Established Sirius Black/Remus Lupin, Sirius Black and Remus Lupin Raise Harry Potter, but he still grew up with the Dursleys, Indian Harry Potter, I can't remember if I mention that but he always is in my stories, Courtship, Romance, Protective Harry Potter, Insecure Draco Malfoy

Language:
English

Stats:
Published: 2022-07-31 Updated: 2023-10-17 Words: 29,348
Chapters: 14/?

Boy in His Arms

by SilverRosesAndDragons

Summary

Draco just found out who his Dominant Creature mate is, and he is terrified that the boy will reject him.

How will the two of them navigate their newfound relationship, and how will it affect how they deal with the world around them?

Notes

I don't know where this came from, but I decided I wanted to try my hand at a creature fic and this came out. It's been sitting in my completed folder for, like, two months waiting for a title, so shoutout to my friend that helped me come up with one or I might never have posted this.

See the end of the work for more notes

Chapter 1

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Draco Malfoy wakes up one morning to an odd glow in his room. Looking around, he sees that the light is coming from a parchment on his desk: the Inheritance Test he got recently on his 15th birthday. He quickly calls a House-elf to get his parents before making his way over to his desk. The glow fades from the parchment as soon as he picks it up, and his eyes dart down to the "Creature Information" section of the Test.

Creature Information

Creature: *Water Nymph*

Role: *Submissive*

Mate(s): Hadrian J. Potter

Draco's heart freezes upon seeing the name of his mate, where it had previously only read "Undetermined." Potter must have just come into his inheritance for the information to have been updated. He didn't know that Potter's full name was "Hadrian," but that is hardly what's important right now. He's scared. Potter rejected him before, back in first year, and they haven't gotten along since. They have an odd sort of rivalry, and more than that, Draco has been a right prat to him and his friends. He's scared that Potter will reject him again, and if that happens, he probably won't survive; most submissives don't. Draco resolves himself that he will do what he must to survive, even if he has to beg, even if he has to be perfectly obedient. Self-preservation is, after all, a Slytherin trait.

Before long there's a soft knock on his door before it slowly opens. "Draco, darling," his mother's voice calls, "who is it?"

Draco can't bring himself to speak so he just shakes his head, eyes still locked on the name of his mate. After a moment his father comes up behind him, placing a large hand on his shoulder. Draco knows the moment that his father reads the name on the parchment because his grip tightens, and suddenly Draco can't hold himself back anymore.

He turns and clings to the front of his father's robes, burying his face in the man's chest, shaking and shivering against him. "It will be alright," Lucius comforts, gently prying the now-crumpled parchment out of his son's hand. "Lady Magic must have a reason for bonding you together." Lucius runs one hand up and down Draco's back in a comforting motion while handing the Inheritance Test to his wife with the other.

"Oh, Draco," Narcissa gasps a moment later and Draco finds himself sandwiched between his parents in an embrace. "Your Father is right. Have faith in Lady Magic, darling."

After what feels like both an eternity and a mere moment, they all pull back. "We should head to the bank. Draco, we will be in the Floo room, join us when you are dressed," Lucius instructs, and Draco nods as his parents leave the room, feeling a little better than he had before.

Hadrian is sitting in the Potter account manager Silvertooth's office. It is the morning of his fifteenth birthday, and he came into a creature inheritance as a Dark Elf earlier today. After taking his Magical Signature and Creature Inheritance Tests he had been shuffled into a ritual room for a cleansing. Apparently he had been under a few compulsions to make him more reckless, as well as associating the Dark with being evil and distrust of Slytherins. The most worrying to him was the loyalty potion he had been given for Dumbledore and the Light, though luckily all such things have been cleansed from his system.

Currently, he is discussing family finances with Silvertooth, as going through his creature inheritance means that magic sees him as being of age, allowing him to take up the Potter lordship. There are subsidiaries to the Potter family that he now has a responsibility to take care of, as well as properties and shares in companies to manage. There is a knock on the door and Hadrian turns to look as a goblin enters.

"The Malfoys are here, Lord Potter," the new goblin says.

Oh, right, Draco Malfoy is his submissive mate. This will certainly be interesting. "Take me to a meeting room, then fetch my mate. I will

meet with him and no one else," he instructs, before turning to Silvertooth. "I trust we can continue this conversation at a later time?"

"Of course, Lord Potter. May your adversaries cower under your power," Silvertooth says, honouring Hadrian with a formal Goblin parting. He is one of the few Wizards to have earned such respect.

"And may your enemies' blood run at your feet," he returns before following the lower-ranking goblin out of the room.

Draco is waiting with his parents in the Gringotts Bank waiting area. The Malfoys had informed a teller of their business here, and they had been told to wait while someone checked with Lord Potter. The longer they are made to wait, the more nervous Draco becomes. What if Potter refuses to even meet with him? What if he meets with him only to say he wants nothing to do with Draco? What if…

Draco's thoughts are cut off by the arrival of a goblin. "Heir Draco Malfoy?" the creature says, and he nods. "Follow me." The goblin starts walking without even waiting for him to stand.

They walk down confusing, winding stone corridors that Draco could never find his own way through before stopping at a door. The goblin knocks twice before cracking it open, though Draco can still not see inside. "Lord Potter? Heir Malfoy is here, as you requested."

Softly, muffled through the mostly-closed door, Draco hears someone say, "Thank you, please send him in. May your gold flow."

"May your vaults grow," the goblin replies, shocking Draco momentarily, as Wixen are never given such respect by the goblins. The goblin turns to face him. "Well, go on then."

As soon as Draco is through the door it slams behind him, and he jumps slightly. When he looks up, Potter is the only other person in the room. He's leaning against the arm of a couch, managing to look both casual and intimidating. His black hair is falling in his face, and his green eyes shine from behind it, observing Draco in silence. Draco avoids the other boy's eyes and bows his head slightly, trying to show submission.

“Are you going to come in?” Potter says, and though it is phrased as a question it feels like an instruction. Draco realises that he is still standing right inside the door and moves a few steps further into the room, towards this boy who has been his rival all through school. “Come closer. Let me get a look at you.” Draco gulps, not really wanting to but not daring to disobey. This time, he stops about an arm’s length from the black-haired boy, eyes firmly on his own feet.

Hadrian, meanwhile, is observing the blond curiously. He is acting submissive, obedient, and almost timid. This doesn’t line up at all with what he knows of Malfoy, as the boy usually has an air of confidence about him even when he’s not showing off, seeming comfortable in his own skin. The boy in front of him now is nothing like that. Hadrian decides very quickly that he doesn’t like it.

Reaching out slowly, hoping not to startle the boy, he uses one finger to gently lift Malfoy’s chin so he can meet his eyes. Hadrian can feel the boy tense, but he doesn’t try to pull away.

Draco finds that once he meets the other boy’s emerald eyes, he can’t look away. He feels a calmness and a sense of safety wash over him, his creature instincts telling him to trust his mate. However, these feelings cannot override the fear he feels that his mate will not want him and will send him away. He forces his eyes away, looking over the taller boy’s shoulder because he can no longer bow his head with his chin still being held gently.

Hadrian also feels instinctual emotions when their eyes meet, telling him to protect and care for his mate. He can also, somehow, sense that the other boy is terrified right now. This worries him, and his creature wants him to wrap Draco in an embrace and make all of his worries go away. He senses that Draco would not be very receptive to that at the moment, however, and decided to address it his own way. “Draco,” he says, voice as gentle as he can make it. The blond’s eyes dart to his at the use of his given name. “You’re scared. Why?”

Draco’s eyes dart away again. “I’m not scared,” he says quietly, though it wouldn’t be convincing even if Hadrian couldn’t feel Draco’s emotions right now.

“I can feel your fear, Draco. Please don’t lie to me,” he says, pleading.

Draco continues looking over Hadrian’s shoulder, but he answers, which Hadrian counts as a win. “I’m scared that you’ll reject me. That you don’t want me and will send me away. It would kill me; I’m not

strong enough to survive it. I- I would understand why, after how- how horrible I've been to you. I'm s-so scared that you w-won't even give me a chance."

Draco's shoulders are shaking, and Hadrian realises that he's crying. It breaks his heart that his mate is feeling this, and it makes it even worse that he caused it. He moves the hand that is under Draco's chin to stroke his cheek, wiping away a tear. "I'm not going to reject you," he promises, voice barely above a whisper. Draco flings himself forward to bury his face in Hadrian's chest. The black-haired boy is startled, but wraps his arms around his shaking mate without hesitation. He brings one hand up to cup the blond's head and wraps the other around his waist, whispering comforts in his ear. "You're okay. I've got you. You're safe," he says over and over in different ways while holding the sobbing boy tight to his chest. At one point he even finds himself saying, "I won't let anyone hurt you."

After a while, the sobs soften to sniffles and Hadrian lets the flow of words stop, but keeps his arms tightly around Draco. He doesn't let go until he feels Draco start to pull back. Draco steps back, a hand coming up to wipe his eyes. "Sorry," he mumbles, avoiding Hadrian's eyes again.

"Don't be," Hadrian says softly, but with a firmness behind his words that shows he's serious.

"But-" Draco can't seem to think of an ending to whatever he was going to say, so Hadrian jumps in.

"I'm your mate," he reminds the blond. "It's my job to take care of you."

"You accept me?" Draco asks, eyes wide and voice still a little unsure. "As your mate?"

Hadrian sighs. "Of course I do. Now come, you should sit down. You look tired." Draco nods and allows himself to be led to the couch. When Hadrian goes to move away, Draco grabs his arm.

"Stay with me?" the blond asks, seeming shy still.

"If you want," Hadrian says, sitting down next to Draco and tucking the boy under his arm. "Anything you want." He watches fondly as his mate drifts off to sleep, and knows that it's true. He would do just about anything for this boy in his arms.

Chapter End Notes

Please let me know what you think. As I said at the beginning this story is a little outside of what I usually write, so I would really appreciate any feedback or con-crit you might have. Kudos and comments are appreciated!

Chapter 2

Chapter Notes

> Thank you to everyone who commented on the first chapter and wanted more. This was going to be a oneshot, but it clearly isn't anymore. I have no promises about how far this will go, because I honestly didn't plan to continue this and then found myself writing a second chapter in my head. Hopefully, this chapter lives up to expectations.
>
> Also, everything is canon compliant before the story starts unless otherwise noted.
> Otherwise noted: Harry has secretly lived with Sirius since the end of his third year, and Dumbledore doesn't know. Therefore, Grimmauld is not being used as Order HQ.
>
> Content Warning: discussions of non-graphic off-screen domestic abuse between minor characters.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Hadrian looks fondly down at the blond head pillowed against his chest, attached to the boy sleeping against his side. There is a book open in his lap that he Summoned from his room in Grimmauld Place, but he hasn't gotten much reading done. Instead, he has spent most of his time watching over Draco's sleeping form and trying not to move and wake him. Hadrian regrets not taking Draco's hand back when they were eleven, but understands that it was at least partially due to the compulsions that were already on him. Draco was also a brat back then who didn't have very good people skills, to be fair, but he still regrets it. He's never been able to keep his attention off of Draco, especially last year. The goblins told him that he was starting to break through some of the compulsions himself as his inheritance drew nearer, which is likely at least part of the reason for his increased awareness of the blond with nothing telling him that Draco was untrustworthy. He found himself looking for the other boy at meals to make sure he was eating, and observing him in shared classes just to see how he was doing. Now that he thinks about it, his instincts were probably influencing those actions to some extent.

Glancing at his watch, Hadrian realises that Draco has been sleeping for over half an hour. He would be content to let the blond sleep, except he suddenly remembers that Draco's parents are waiting, and

are probably worried about their son. With that in mind, Hadrian moves to card a hand through Draco's hair, wanting to wake him up gently. "Draco, darling," he murmurs, leaning down to the other boy's ear, "it's time to wake up now. Can you do that for me?"

Draco makes an adorable little whining noise and snuggles further into Hadrian, clearly fighting against waking up. For a brief moment, Hadrian wants to let him sleep, but he sternly reminds himself why he's waking the blond up in the first place. "I know, but nap time's over," he says gently, hand still carding through white-blond hair.

After a moment, Draco's hands come up to rub at his eyes as he slowly pulls away. "Sorry, I didn't mean to fall asleep on you," he says, sleepy blue eyes glancing at Hadrian.

Hadrian just smiles softly. "You clearly needed it. Are you feeling any better?" Draco nods. "Good. I woke you up because I thought your parents would probably like an update on how this went."

Draco gasps, then says, "I forgot they were waiting for me. They must be worried by now. How long was I asleep?"

"A little over half an hour. Would you like to go see them now?" Hadrian suggests.

Draco nods then hesitates. "Are- Will you come with me?"

Hadrian is taken aback by the question for a moment — Draco wants him to meet his parents? The idea is honestly a bit terrifying, though not for the same reasons it would have been a month ago. Sure he's a bit worried about Mr Malfoy's status as a Death Eater, but he also understands now that he doesn't really know anything about the Dark or why he's supposed to fight against them. Moreso, he's worried about the fact that they are his *submissive mate's parents*. They are essentially his future in-laws. Hadrian's not completely sure he's ready for this, but one glance at Draco and it doesn't matter. Draco looks unsure, and Hadrian doesn't like it. "Of course," he says, "if you want me to."

Draco's smile makes up for any worries Hadrian is feeling.

Narcissa Malfoy is sitting nervously in the Gringotts Bank waiting area, trying not to fidget as she looks through a Society gossip magazine. It has been nearly an hour since Draco was led away, and despite her and Lucius' reassurances this morning, she is worried for her son. Narcissa never had an Inheritance, but Bella did, as did Regulus. Bellatrix had gotten her Creature from their mother's side, the Rosiers, as a selkie, while Regulus, like Draco, got the Black Inheritance as a nymph, though he was a tree nymph. One of the main reasons for Bella's … instability is her mate's treatment of her. Rodolphus was never the most caring dominant, and even though he did not reject her his treatment of her messed with her instincts. After all, her instincts tell her that Rodolphus will protect her and she should trust him when he is the one that hurt her.

It pained Narcissa to watch her older sister go through that, and she worries that Draco will be put through something similarly troubling. She does not know Lord Potter, does not know if he would physically harm her son as Rodolphus did to Bella, but she knows that he does not have the best history with Draco. The two of them being at odds constantly would not be much better for her son than if Lord Potter hurt him intentionally, and it would break Narcissa's heart to watch her baby go through that.

She looks up as she hears a familiar voice, though she can't make out the words, and sees her son walking in through a side door next to a raven-haired, green-eyed boy that can only be Lord Potter. Draco appears to be rambling on about something, and the look of gentle fondness on the green-eyed boy's face sends a wave of relief crashing through Narcissa, though she does her best to keep up her pureblood mask. Oddly enough, she does not see a goblin guiding their way.

Potter leans in to say something to Draco and he suddenly looks up at her and Lucius before walking at a quick — though still composed — pace toward them. She notices Potter following at a more sedate pace before Draco is right in front of them, a slightly shy smile on his face. "I apologise for leaving you waiting for so long Father, Mother," he says. He hesitates before continuing, "I… Well, I fell asleep."

Narcissa is slightly confused by Draco's statement as Lord Potter comes up behind him. "It's been an emotional morning; needing a nap is understandable," he says quietly, giving Narcissa the impression that the statement was only meant for her son. At a more normal volume, he greets, "Well met, Lord Malfoy. Well met, Lady Malfoy." He gives a respectful nod to each of them.

It is Lucius who responds, “Well met, Lord Potter. If I may be frank?” Speaking frankly is unlike Lucius, but Narcissa thinks she knows where he’s going. Potter gives a “go ahead” gesture with his hand. “I expect you to treat my son well, otherwise we *will* take legal action, mated or not.”

Draco gasps out a scandalised, “Father!” but Lord Potter only nods and says, “Of course, Lord Malfoy. I would expect nothing less.”

Lucius seems to accept that answer, so Narcissa takes her chance to speak. “Well met, Lord Potter. How have you been keeping?”

“Well, thank you. And you?” Potter gives her a polite smile. She had been under the impression that he was usually much less … refined.

“I am well. Perhaps we should move this conversation elsewhere? We did not have a chance to eat this morning,” Narcissa suggests, both because it’s true and because sharing a meal may help them get to know one another better.

Hadrian frowns slightly, glancing at Draco. He is instantly worried over the fact that the blond has not yet eaten today. After a moment he says, “I have other business I must attend to here, you should go without me.” Draco’s pout, though slight, is instantaneous. Hadrian immediately wants to do everything in his power to take the look of sadness away. He sighs. Without really thinking he says, “Or, I suppose it could wait a few hours, if you want me to come.”

Draco perks up immediately, and Hadrian knows at that moment that he will never be able to deny the blond anything. Still, there is a hint of uncertainty in his joy. “Are you sure?” Draco asks.

Hadrian sighs again though he can feel a small smile pulling at his lips, “Of course.”

Narcissa, watching the exchange, feels some of the tension in her chest ease. The way Lord Potter changed his plans without a second thought at Draco’s pout and the way his shoulders slumped slightly when he gave in reassured her somewhat that Potter cared for her son’s happiness. Of course, there is no true way to tell whether Potter would be a caring partner this early, no way to be sure he won’t be abusive, but for now, she will take what reassurances she can get. All she can do was watch for little clues like this, and keep an eye on Draco as the relationship progresses.

The four of them end up at a charming little restaurant on one of the smaller alleys connected to Diagon. There was a magical privacy bubble around each table so none of the patrons had to worry about their private matters being overheard. It catered mostly to the upper class, and as such everything was very high quality. Hadrian was a bit overwhelmed by the place, not to mention all of the fancy-sounding things on the menu, but he did his best not to let it show. He has gotten much better at etiquette and upper-class social protocol recently, but he is still not used to being in such fancy places. He orders the most familiar-looking thing on the menu, having never heard of some of the options.

While they are waiting for their food to arrive, Lady Malfoy strikes up a conversation. “So, Lord Potter, how have you been spending your summer?”

“Please, Lady Malfoy, call me Hadrian,” the Potter lord says while considering how to answer her question without giving away any information he shouldn’t. “I have mostly been doing supplemental studies and catching up on lessons and training.”

“Catching up?” Lady Malfoy inquires mildly.

Hadrian nods, again considering his wording carefully before he speaks. If he plays this right, he could turn it into an advantage. “Yes. I was raised in the Muggle world, so I never got heir training or learned about our history or culture while I was growing up. My current guardian is helping me catch up on what I missed. I only started living with them last summer, however, so we haven’t had time to go over everything.”

“You were raised by Muggles?” Draco asks, then quickly looks apologetic. Hadrian doesn’t mind the question, however. He wants Draco to feel comfortable around him and not worry about Hadrian being upset with him.

“I was,” Hadrian says.

The group are quiet for a few minutes, the Malfoys apparently not knowing how to respond to that revelation and Hadrian not offering any more information for now. Eventually, Lord Malfoy breaks the silence with a change in subject. “What would you like to do after Hogwarts, Lord Potter?”

“I’m not sure,” Hadrian answers honestly. “I know people expect me to join the Aurors, but I don’t want to sign up to fight my whole life. I fight because I have to, to stay alive and protect those around me, but it’s not something that I enjoy. I have three years left at Hogwarts to figure it out, though.”

Draco is relieved to hear that Hadrian doesn’t want to go into the Aurors because it is one of the more dangerous jobs in the Wizarding World. He knows he would constantly be worrying if his mate went into that line of work. He doesn’t get long to think about it, though, because soon Hadrian is turning to him and saying, “What would you like to do when we’re done with school, Draco?”

“Um… I’m not really sure,” he mumbles. It’s not completely true. Draco would like to continue his education and work towards a mastery, or maybe a healer’s licence, but he’s a submissive. There are still plenty of people who think a submissive’s place is to do the housework and look after the children, and therefore there is no need for them to further their education. Once a pair is fully mated, the dominant can enforce those expectations and stop the submissive from continuing their education or getting a job. There are some laws now to protect submissives, but they mostly pertain to physical abuse or rape by the dominant; the dominant is still given a lot of control over the submissive’s life.

Hadrian gives him a searching look and seems like he wants to ask more, but luckily the food arrives at that moment, distracting him. Draco is grateful for the interruption, as he doesn’t want to talk about what he’ll be allowed to do in the future right now, especially not with his parents here. He ignores his mother’s concerned look as he begins eating.

“I really should be getting back to the bank,” Hadrian is saying about an hour later, after they have all finished eating. “Thank you for inviting me to dine with you. It was a pleasure meeting you, Lady Malfoy.” Hadrian kisses the back of Narcissa Malfoy’s hand in a formal, gentlemanly gesture before he turns toward Lucius Malfoy. “It was nice to properly meet you, Lord Malfoy,” he says, shaking the older lord’s hand. He then turns towards Draco, his polite smile growing softer at the edges, and his voice quieter, meant only for

Draco though the older Malfoys would still be able to hear it. “It was wonderful to see you, Draco. Hopefully, we will see each other again soon.” Hadrian pauses for a moment, seeming to hesitate, before he says, “If you will allow it, I would like to court you. Formally, that is.”

Draco is confused and allows it to show in his scrunched brow. “But we’re already mates,” he says, and can hear the unsureness in his own voice. He hates that he sounds nervous, but he is. His nerves from this morning had calmed considerably since Hadrian said he accepted him, but now they come flaring back. Courting is a common practice among purebloods, but mostly for those without creature inheritances. It is used to help determine if two people wanted to marry, so it is considered irrelevant for creatures, who have already had mates given to them by Magic. What if Hadrian has decided that he isn’t sure he wants Draco as a mate?

“We are,” Hadrian says, interrupting Draco’s internal panic. His voice is soothing and he looks right into Draco’s eyes. He looks worried as if he can tell Draco is freaking out, and Draco suddenly remembers that he had implied something like that when they first met that morning at Gringotts. “But we haven’t been on the best terms in the past. We don’t know each other very well, and I can tell you’re still very nervous about all of this. Let me show you that I can take care of you before we go farther, and give us a chance to get to know each other better.” Hadrian pauses, and they simply look at each other for a long moment. “So, Draco Malfoy, will you allow me to court you?”

Draco takes a deep breath before he speaks, giving himself time to process. “Okay,” he says. “Yes, you may court me.” The smile he receives in response makes his stomach flutter and he thinks that maybe everything will work out.

Chapter End Notes

> Please let me know what you think, and if there is anything you would like to see in the future in this fic. As I said at the beginning of the chapter, I hadn't really planned to turn this into a multi-chaptered work, so where this goes is still flexible.
>
> Also, I'm taking votes: good Voldemort or evil Voldemort or somewhere in between? Either way, Dumbledore will not be the "good guy" in this fic.

Chapter 3

Chapter Notes

> A quick update, yay! Most will probably take longer than a week and a half, but I finished this chapter quickly, so here you go. Sorry it's a bit of a filler chapter.
>
> Content Warning: discussion of oppression. Not really sure if it's necessary, but just in case.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“How’d it go?” Sirius asks as soon as his godson steps through the Floo, much more gracefully than he used to. Hadrian has been gone for hours, having left for Gringotts at about three-thirty in the morning when his Inheritance completed, and it is now mid-afternoon. Hadrian simply smirks, prompting Sirius to roll his eyes. “Okay, fine. What Creature did you get, then?”

“A dark elf,” Hadrian says. “From the long-dormant Mors line, decendants of Mordred. I picked up a book about it from one of the Vaults.” Sirius gapes at him; his godson, a descendant of Mordred’s line? Even in the Wixen World, the history surrounding the time of King Arthur is a bit jumbled, but Mordred was unquestionably a key player at that time. Sirius opens his mouth to ask — he doesn’t even know what, but Hadrian interrupts him before he can put voice to his confusion. “And before you ask, I’m a dominant.”

Sirius’ train of thought is derailed, so he gives his godson a ‘we’ll talk about this later’ look as he allows the conversation to be redirected. “Do you know who your mate is?” Hadrian’s smirk and eyes soften, giving Sirius the answer to his question. “Why don’t you take a seat and tell me about them. I’m assuming they came to Gringotts to meet you?”

Hadrian nods as he settles into an armchair near his godfather. He curls comfortably into his seat, turning to face the older man. “It’s Draco. We never got along very well in the past, but I had compulsions on me to stay away from him — we can talk about that later —” he can see Sirius wants to interrupt, but he wants to tell his godfather about his mate first, “and he was defensive because I hurt him by refusing to shake his hand when we first met. He was so scared I was going to reject him that I could feel it as soon as our eyes met.

All my instincts were telling me to wrap him in my arms and make all his fears go away. Is that normal, to be able to feel the submissive's emotions?"

Sirius study's his godson for a moment, trying to think of how to answer. He is an odd case in terms of Creature Inheritences because he triggered his creature at thirteen by trying to find his Animagus form, even though there are no records of Grimms appearing in his family line. Remus is his mate, and as a bitten werewolf he had already "Inherited" before then, so their mateship started at thirteen. "I'm not sure," Sirius answers honestly. "You know I'm not exactly a normal case, and your dad never Inherited. I can feel strong emotions from Moony sometimes when we're both transformed, but not when we're in our human forms."

"Oh," is Hadrian's only response, a small frown on his face.

"That doesn't mean it's not normal," Sirius is quick to remind him. "We'll have to do some research later. Now what else happened? Do you know why he was scared? It's pretty rare for a dominant to reject their submissive, or Lady Magic wouldn't have bound them together."

The boy nods. "I think it's because I rejected him before, back in first year, and because of how antagonistic he was towards me afterward. He said he would 'understand why' if I rejected him again. It seemed like he actually expected me to send him away and let him die." Hadrian frowns and mutters under his breath, "I won't let that old bastard get away with what he did to me."

"You cleared it up, though? With Draco?" Sirius clarifies. He can't imagine Hadrian would leave his mate feeling like that, but he feels the need to be sure. Draco is his cousin's son after all — family, even if they've never met.

"Of course," Hadrian says with a scoff. "I convinced him to let me court him, to give me a chance to show I'll take good care of him and won't hurt him. I know we could just spend time together casually instead, but I'm hoping that following the rules of courting will help him feel more comfortable. I want to show him and his family that I won't take advantage of him needing me to survive like some dominants do."

"You know I'd be the first one stepping in if you did," Sirius says honestly. Taking advantage of a submissive is one of the few things he won't ever joke about. It takes a moment for another thing Hadrian

said to process. “Did you meet them then, his family?”

Hadrian nods. “They invited me to share an early lunch with them, after Lord Malfoy threatened me to treat Draco well. I could tell that they’re both very worried for him. I’m sure finding out your child is a submissive and mated to someone they never got along with before would be scary for any parent.”

“I’m sure. It seems everything turned out well with that, though?” Hadrian nods, and Sirius notices a faint pink tint to his tan cheeks. “Good, then let’s loop back to all of the things you skipped over while talking about your mate.”

Hadrian bites his lip. Honestly, he doesn’t want Sirius to know all of it. His godfather can be very protective, as he has learned over the last year, and he doesn’t want the man to do anything stupid as a result of everything that has come to light today. Still, he pulls two peices of parchment out of his robe pocket and unshrinks them. “Just, try to stay calm, okay?” he says as he holds the first piece of parchment out.

Sirius looks down at the parchment now in his hands.

Magical Signature Test

Date: *31 July 1995*

Name: *Hadrian Jameson Potter*

Basic Information

Core Affiliation: *Dark*

Natural Magical Abilities: *Parselmagic, Magical Sensitivity, Mind Magicks, Blood Magicks*

External Magical Influences

Compulsions:

- *Loyalty to Albus Dumbledore, Order of the Pheonix, Light Side (Oct 1981 to present)*
- *Don’t talk about abuse (Oct 1981 to present)*

- *Distrust and Hatred of Slytherins, Dark Wixen, Dark Magic, Voldemort (Oct 1981 to present)*
- *Loyalty to and Trust in Ron Weasley, Weasley family (Sept 1991 to present)*
- *Distrust and Hate Draco Malfoy (Sept 1991 to present)*
- *Don't care about grades (Sept 1991 to present)*
- *Recklessness (Sept 1991 to present; decreasing strength)*
- *Loyalty to and Trust in Hermione Granger (Oct 1991 to present)*
- *Distance from and Indifference to Sirius Black (Sept 1993 to Present)*

Potions:

- *Love Potion to Ginerva Weasley (Aug 1992 to present; increasing strength)*

Blocks:

- *Core 25% (since Oct 1981)*
- *Dark Magic 99% (since Oct 1981)*
- *Parselmagic 99% (since Oct 1981)*
- *Magical Sensitivity 80% (since Oct 1981)*
- *Mind Magicks 99% (since Oct 1981)*
- *Blood Magicks 99% (since Oct 1981)*

Other:

- *Blood Magic Protection (Oct 1981 to present)*
- *Attempted Killing Curse (Oct 1981)*
- *Horcrux of Tom Marvolo Riddle|Dark Lord Voldemort*

Well, now Sirius understands why his godson was worried about him

staying calm. He is very much so *not* calm right now. He can feel his Grimm magic seeping out of him, filling the room with a dark aura.

“Siri, please calm down. Don’t do anything stupid,” he hears Hadrian say. “The goblins were able to cleanse the compulsions, blocks, and love potion from my system. We can deal with Dumbledore, who is obviously the cause of many of them, later, but if you do something stupid now we’ll lose our chance to get back at him in a meaningful way later.”

Hearing his godson’s logic, Sirius takes several deep breaths, drawing his magic back into himself, settling his Grimm’s protective instincts using his human mind. “Okay,” he says eventually. “At least they’re gone now, though the compulsions clearly weren’t working at full strength before anyways. Did you tell your mate about the compulsions?”

“Not yet,” Hadrian says, shaking his head. “I’m not going to keep it from him or lie to him, but he was already so overwhelmed that I didn’t want to make it worse. I’ll tell him next time I see him.” The boy lets out a tired sigh. “At least the compulsions didn’t change my personality much, just who I trusted or spent time with. And even though I never cared about my grades, I always cared about learning as much as I could, so my knowledge didn’t suffer any.”

Sirius laughs, though it is slightly strained. He hates that his godson was put through all of that, and that he wasn’t there to stop it. “You’re right about that. If it was an aversion to studying, your heir training would be going a lot slower. Though that recklessness did get you in trouble during your first two years in school, at least.”

“Yeah, but it was wearing off the quickest too. It was too far opposite my natural personality to hold very well, and the old man probably couldn’t tell last year because I didn’t have a choice about any of the crazy dangerous situations I had to participate in,” Hadrian says. “Now, are you ready to see the Inheritance Test?”

Sirius nods and reaches out to take the parchment offered to him.

Inheritance Test

Date: *31 July 1995*

Name: *Hadrian Jameson Potter*

Birth: *31 July 1980*

Mother: *Lilian J. Potter nee Evans*

Father: *Jameson F. Potter*

Godfathers (through magic): *Sirius O. Lupin-Black, Remus J. Lupin-Black*

Creature Information

Creature: *Dark Elf*

Role: *Dominant*

Mate(s): *Draco L. Malfoy*

Family Lines and Titles

Lord:

- *Potter (Paternal) (All holdings)*
- Peverell (Paternal) (All holdings of British branch)
- Mors (Chosen by Magicks) (All holdings)

Heir:

- *Black (Godfather)*
- *Slytherin (Conquest, distant Maternal)*

"Well, that's not nearly as overwhelming as the other one," Sirius says, relieved. There are a few powerful titles listed, but other than finding out Hadrian has rights to the Peverell and Slytherin families he already knew what to expect from this test. "I'll dig up the Black Heir ring for you so I can give it to you at dinner."

Hadrian nods, "Speaking of dinner, can you wake me up when it's ready? I need a couple-hour nap. Also, could you go over all this with Remus when he gets home?" he gestures to the two pieces of parchment now resting on the coffee table.

“Of course, pup, you go rest.”

Hadrian is woken by the sound of knocking. He groans a vague invitation, not really wanting to wake up yet, pulling his pillow over his face. He hears the door creak open, then someone sits at the edge of his bed, depressing it on one side. “Hey, cub. Long day?” a gentle, somewhat rough voice says, and Hadrian pulls his pillow off his face to look at Remus.

“You’re home,” he says, even though it’s stating the obvious.

“Yeah,” Remus smiles down at him. “Sirius told me about your day. Sorry I couldn’t be here when you got home.”

Hadrian shakes his head. “No, I’m glad you have a job. That’s more important. How’s the bookshop?”

“It’s good. Bookshops are always my favourite places to work. I’d still love to open my own someday, though. A Wixen one,” the werewolf says wistfully.

“You will. Someday you’ll be able to,” Hadrian says with conviction.

“I hope you’re right, kiddo. But for now, let’s go down to dinner and you can tell me all about your first meeting with your mate.”

Kreature made a proper birthday dinner with all of Hadrian's favourite dishes (scalloped potatoes, roast ham, strawberry and candies walnut salad) and treacle tart for dessert. Kreature was a bit cranky when they first moved in, defensive of the house he’d taken care of his whole life, but now he’s just happy to have a family living in the Grimmauld house again, especially because Sirius accepted the title of Lord Black.

“He said he didn’t know what he wanted to do after Hogwarts, but, I don’t know,” Hadrian is saying a while into the meal. “It seemed more like he just didn’t want to say, like he was nervous.”

After a moment, Remus suggests, “Maybe he was nervous about what you would think. You have to remember that dominants still have a lot of control, legally, over their submissives. We have more rights than we did, say, a hundred years ago, but we still don’t have much control over our own lives unless our dominant allows us to. Whatever he wants to do after school, you could deny it to him, and he doesn’t know you well enough to know you wouldn’t.”

“I hadn’t thought about that,” Hadrian admits. “But of course he’ll be able to do what he wants. It’s his life.”

“Most dominants don’t think about it because they don’t have to, while submissives have to worry if they’ll even still be treated as a person. You have to remember that he doesn’t really know you right now, and there are a lot of things you could legally do that would be viewed as wrong in general society, but not between a dominant and submissive,” Remus says.

Hadrian nods, looking down at his plate. Remus is right, he didn’t consider that because he doesn’t have to worry about it personally, and it makes him sad that his mate has worried about it, and might still be. It takes him a minute to realise that Remus understands so well because he’s been through it too, probably before he knew Sirius was his mate. He looks up at Remus with wide, pleading eyes. “How do I reassure him?”

Remus gives him a soft smile, “Talk to him. You’re going to court, right? So on one of your outings, talk to him about it. Be honest. It might take a while for him to trust you, but all you can do is be truthful and show him that you mean it.”

“Thanks, Remus.”

After dinner and presents, it is time to officially make Hadrian the Heir Black.

“I, Lord Sirius Orion Black, do name you, Hadrian Jameson Potter, as my Heir. Do you accept this responsibility?”

“I do.”

“Do you swear to care for the Black family to the best of your ability, for as long as you are able?”

“I swear.”

“And will you protect the Black family from harm when it is within your power to do so?”

“I will.”

“Then take your place among your family,” Sirius says, holding out an open ring box in black satin. The ring inside is made of a dark metal and set with a small black diamond. When Hadrian slips it onto his left forefinger he feels a cool magic wash over him, probing him, before it seeps in and settles into his core. The Black Family Magicks have accepted him.

Chapter End Notes

Did I mean for the dinner conversation to become a metaphor for white privilege? No, not at all. Oh, well. I blame my ethnic studies class.

Please let me know what you think in the comments. I have done no story mapping so far, so if there's anything you'd like to see, let me know and I'll consider it.

Polling regarding Voldemort's role in this story is still open. So far it's looking like people want him to be somewhat neutral. If you have a different opinion, please let me know.

Also, I am taking suggestions for where you would like Hadrian and Draco to go on their dates. I have a few I'm planning to include, but I'm open to more ideas.

Chapter 4

Chapter Notes

> So, I was going to have more happen in this chapter, but decided to post it now and just write the rest as a separate chapter. Also, introducing Draco's closest friend!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“I don’t know what to think,” Draco admits to Blaise. They are in a sitting room at Malfoy Manor, three days after Draco found out that Hadrian Potter is his dominant. “He said he won’t reject me, but what if he changes his mind? Or what if he’s one of those super controlling doms and I’m not allowed to see my parents or my friends anymore? Or what if…”

“Draco!” Blaise cuts him off, voice firm in a way that almost makes Draco recoil. “Breathe for a moment, okay?” his voice is much gentler this time. Draco nods and does his best to even out his breathing. “Give him a chance, yeah? I know you two haven’t gotten on well in the past, but if he’s willing to move past that, you should try to as well. Now, he wrote to you, didn’t he? What did the letter say?”

Draco took a deep breath before pulling the letter out and beginning to read it aloud.

> Dear Draco,
>
> (I just realised that I never asked if it was alright for me to use your given name. I hope so, if not please let me know. I’m going to keep using it in this letter, but I won’t after this if you don’t want me to. Either way, I would appreciate it if you call me Hadrian.)
>
> I would like to set up a time to determine the rules of our courtship. I am aware that courtships are uncommon among those of us with Creature Inheritances, but I am hoping that the structure and defined rules and boundaries will help you feel more comfortable with me. Please feel free to bring anyone you would like to the meeting; I will be bringing my guardian and his mate, and I only ask that whomever you bring would keep who my guardians are to themselves. Also, please begin thinking about who you would like on the approved chaperone list. I will trust

your judgement when it comes to picking chaperones; I do not mind who they are so long as you feel comfortable.

Please let me know when you would like to hold the meeting, as well as where you would feel most comfortable with having it. I look forward to the chance to take you out after the details are figured out.

Yours,

Hadrian Potter

"It seems like he wants you to have some say. That's a good sign, isn't it?" Blaise says once Draco has finished reading, and the blond nods. "Have you thought about chaperones at all?"

Draco shakes his head. "Not much, but… would it be alright if I put you down? It's just… once we're back at school, it's not like my parents can really chaperone, and I trust you more than our classmates." Draco bites his bottom lip nervously, glancing at Blaise from the corner of his eye.

"Of course, Draco, if you would like to," Blaise says, a smile pulling at the corners of his lips. "What about when and where to have the meeting?"

Draco sighs, "I'm hoping we can host it here. It's private enough, and also somewhere I feel comfortable. I'll have to talk to my parents about it first, though. The letter only came in this morning."

"Okay, well that's a good start. Try not to stress about the meeting too much, it won't do you any good." Draco raises an incredulous eyebrow at his friend. "Let's take your mind off it, okay? Would you like to go flying?"

"You hate flying," Draco says flatly, even more incredulous now. "Besides, it would probably just make me think about him. He's incredible on a broom."

Blaise nods, "No flying, got it. Shopping? There's a new store in Flumen Alley."

"I guess," Draco says. For the next few hours, while the boys shop, Draco is able to forget his worries.

It's a week after Hadrian's fifteenth birthday, and he, Sirius, and Remus are getting ready to Apparate to Malfoy Manor. Hadrian is surprised that Draco requested to have the courting negotiation meeting at his family home, but supposes it is because the familiar environment will make the other boy more comfortable. The Malfoys still do not know who his guardians are, so it will likely be quite a shock when they see Sirius Black, who is still technically a fugitive. All three are dressed in formal clothing, as the situation requires. Remus had protested when they bought him dress robes last year, saying he didn't really need them and didn't want them to have to pay for him, but he came around. "I'm Lord Black, Remus," Sirius had explained, "and as my mate, that makes you Consort Black. You need dress robes for when we can finally go out; we'll both be representing the family."

Sirius side-along Apparates Hadrian to the front gates of the Malfoy Manor, Remus appearing a moment later. The Manor is large and pale in front of them, the extensive grounds spreading around it. The gates, which swing open as soon as Hadrian touches them, are an intricate pattern of wrought iron. The path to the front doors is long and slightly meandering, not going in a direct path but rather weaving through the front gardens. There are other paths branching off of the main one, leading further into the well-maintained gardens. Hadrian has never seen landscaping like this at a private residence before, and can't help but admire their beauty. There is a seamless mix of magical and muggle plants, and Hadrian has the feeling that the shapes of the paths and flowerbeds have some pattern that would only be visible from the upper-story windows of the Manor.

A house elf in a clean, embroidered pillowcase opens the door when they get there. "Masters are in parlour. Lannie will show you," the small elf says, bowing, then looks up and happens to meet Hadrian's eye. "Great one!" she gasps quietly, bowing again, more deeply this time. Hadrian can feel some kind of connection, and realises that there must be some kind of relation between house elves and regular elves. He assumes he didn't feel it with Kreature because they are already bound through the Black family magicks.

"Rise," he says calmly. "Please show us in."

"Of course, Great One," she says, then turns to lead them through the house.

Chapter End Notes

Hope you liked this chapter. Please let me know what you think in the comments below, they always make my day. What's your favourite part? Any questions I probably won't answer? Predictions? ConCrit? Please let me know!

Chapter 5

Chapter Notes

> Sorry that this took so long. I was kinda stuck, then started writing something else. Oh, well. It's here now. I hope you like it.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Draco is sitting in one of the more formal parlours for hosting guests. There is a low table in the middle of the room, a full tea service already set out, magic ensuring that the tea will not go cold. There is a couch and a few armchairs on each side of the table, facing each other, set up for a meeting. Draco is sitting on one of the couches between his parents, waiting for Hadrian Potter to arrive with his guardians.

All three Malfoys look up when the door to the parlour is opened, the house elf that opened it bowing before quickly popping away. There are three people standing in the doorway, but Draco's eyes catch on Hadrian and he barely notices the other two. Hadrian is wearing black dress robes that are somehow a lighter shade than his raven hair with dark green swirling patterns and silver buttons. Draco forgets to breathe for a few seconds, stunned by how beautiful this boy — his dominant — looks. The outfit makes Hadrian's colouration seem even more intense than normal, and Draco can't tear his eyes away.

A smirk spreads across Hadrian's face. Draco hasn't so much as glanced away from him since the door opened. His sweet little mate is practically gaping at him, and Hadrian can't help but feel smug alongside the fondness he always feels for Draco now. The other boy hasn't even taken notice that he is flanked by a werewolf and a fugitive yet, while the Malfoy parents are staring speechlessly at his guardians.

"Thank you for inviting us into your home," Hadrian's voice finally breaks the silence. "Lord and Lady Malfoy, Heir Malfoy, allow me to introduce Lord Sirius Black and his Consort, Remus Lupin. My guardians."

After a long moment, Lady Malfoy seems to shake off her shock. Politely, she says, "It's a pleasure to have you. Would you like to take a seat? We've had tea prepared."

“Yes, thank you,” Sirius says, and moves toward the couch across from the Malfoys. They sit with Remus in the middle, Sirius’ instincts demanding that he keep his submissive in the most protected position possible around people he does not trust. “Perhaps we can begin discussions over tea instead of waiting until after? That seems like the most efficient use of our time,” Sirius says once they are all settled. In reality, he just doesn’t want to suffer through awkward small talk. Courtship negotiations are always awkward or tense, even when the parents arranged the courtship, and he would like to get this over with as quickly as possible. Besides, he’s never been very good at formality.

“Of course,” Lord Malfoy replies, summoning parchment and a quill. He explains, “Just to take notes. We will write up the official document afterwards.” Sirius nods his acceptance.

After a long moment of slightly awkward silence during which Hadrian observes Draco, Lady Malfoy says, “Shall we begin with chaperones, then?”

There are nods from around the room, but Hadrian is the first to speak. “I think that, at least for the first part of the courtship, a chaperone should be present at all times, with the possible exception of group activities. Just to make sure everyone is as comfortable as possible.” Both Malfoy parents quickly agree. Draco bites his lip, looking unsure, but doesn’t raise any objections.

Lord Malfoy makes a note on his parchment. “Very well,” the man says. “And as for the approved chaperone list?”

Again, Hadrian speaks first. He is the one that initiated courtship after all, and Remus and Sirius are just here to support him, even if parents usually take a more active role in negotiations. “I think Draco should decide who he would be most comfortable with.”

All four adults turn their attention to Draco (Hadrian’s attention has been on him the whole time, though he hasn’t been very obvious about it). The blond boy’s cheeks tint a pretty shade of pink at the attention, but his voice is steady as he says, “I want my parents and Blaise, and maybe Uncle Severus.” Hadrians nods, trusting Draco’s judgment even if he isn’t particularly fond of Snape himself.

Lord Malfoy, however, raises an objection. “Are you sure you would like to include Heir Zabini, Draco? Chaperones are generally meant to be adults, not other teenagers.” His voice is concerned rather than harsh, but Draco still seems to wilt slightly under the criticism, eyes

turning down toward his hands in his lap.

“I was just thinking it would be good to have someone for when we’re back at school, and Uncle Severus is very busy. Besides, I trust Blaise,” Draco says, voice quieter than before.

“Okay,” Lord Malfoy says, writing on his parchment again. “That’s good thinking, Draco. We don’t have to do everything the way it is traditionally.”

Draco nods, and they move on to rules for physical contact. Sirius speaks up this time, “I would suggest that we allow holding hands, as well as touching hands or arms. I also think we should include hugs as acceptable, since physical contact and comfort are very important for those with creatures, and hugs are relatively harmless.”

“I’m not sure that’s the best idea,” Lady Malfoy says, sounding hesitant. “That is more physical contact than would usually be allowed at this stage of courtship.”

“That is true, Lady Malfoy, but I agree with Sirius that we might need to make allowances for our creatures here,” Hadrian says. “Not being allowed to hug could be hard on both of our creatures. I would suggest, however, that explicit permission must be given to initiate a hug.”

Lady Malfoy still looks hesitant, but Draco speaks up. “Please, Mother?” is all he says, voice soft and pleading, and it seems to do the trick. The hesitancy in Lady Malfoy’s expression seems to melt away. Hadrian can feel something in himself melt at the tone as well, wanting to give his mate whatever he wants, though he knows it is not a helpful instinct right now.

“Alright, darling,” Lady Malfoy says. There’s a slight pause, then she adds, “Anything else for physical contact?”

Hadrian sees Draco bite his lip again, looking unsure whether or not to speak. When he meets the blond’s eyes, he can feel a spark of longing from Draco. Again, his desire to give his mate anything and everything flares, so he asks quietly, “Was there something else, Draco?”

“Oh, um,” Draco says, seeming slightly startled and looking at Hadrian with wide eyes. “I just, I liked it when you played with my hair. I wondered if we could maybe include that?” Hadrian smiles softly at him, fondness welling in his heart. Though, really, it seems to always

be doing that around Draco now.

“I suppose that would be acceptable,” Lady Malfoy says, bringing Hadrian’s awareness back to the whole room instead of just Draco. Lord Malfoy nods on Draco’s other side.

“Does everyone agree on these rules?” Lord Malfoy asks, and when everyone nods, he starts writing again.

The negotiations go on similarly for the next two hours or so, with the House Elves occasionally bringing finger foods for them to snack on during the process. Now Sirius and Lord Malfoy are drawing up the official contract in another room. Remus is with them because Sirius still doesn’t trust the Malfoys around his mate, leaving Hadrian, Draco, and Lady Malfoy alone in the parlour with nothing to do, which isn’t awkward at all. They sit in silence for a while, but Hadrian notices that Draco keeps glancing at him with longing in his pretty blue eyes.

“Would you like to come sit with me?” Hadrian asks quietly, breaking the silence for the first time in nearly five minutes. He notices Lady Malfoy startle slightly, but his eyes are focused on Draco. “You can if you want.”

Draco glances at his mother before he nods and rises from his seat. He moves slowly around the coffee table in the centre to sit on the couch next to Hadrian, close but not touching. Hadrian reaches out slightly to rub a hand up Draco’s arm, and immediately he can see Draco visibly relax. “It’s good to see you,” he says quietly, very aware of Lady Malfoy’s eyes on them. “How have you been?”

“I’ve been alright,” Draco says, though he doesn’t look at Hadrian as he says it. He seems nervous, still. “And you?”

Hadrian smiles slightly. “I’m good, Draco. I’ve been looking forward to seeing you.”

“Really?” Draco says, glancing over at Hadrian.

“Of course,” Hadrian says, nodding. “I’ve missed you.”

Draco’s cheeks turn bright pink as he whispers back, “I missed you too.”

Hadrian smiles widely, his heart warming at hearing his mate say those words. He reaches to place his hand on one of Draco's where it rests in the blond boy's lap. He gives it a gentle, affectionate squeeze, and before he can even consider if he should pull his hand away, Draco's turns over under his and takes hold of it. When Hadrian glances at Draco the blond's eyes are looking in the opposite direction and he seems slightly tense, but he glances back when Hadrian squeezes his hand again. Hadrian smiles gently at him, and Draco relaxes again. Hadrian hates that his mate is so unsure around him, but knows that only time spent together will fix it. He is willing to be patient and do whatever it takes to reassure his mate that Hadrian is here for him.

Draco, meanwhile, is revelling in the feeling of being close to his dominant, of being allowed to touch, even if it is just his hand. His creature is practically purring from the proximity, and from Hadrian saying he missed Draco. He still feels shy around Hadrian, and is very much so embarrassed that his mother is watching them, but it still feels good. He did miss the other boy, his creature longing to see his mate, telling him that a week is much too long to go without seeing each other and that he needs to remind the dominant how pretty and good he is so the other's attention won't be drawn by someone else. He knows it's unfounded, at least he really hopes it is, but that's what his instincts have been telling him. And ever since Hadrian walked in today he's been longing to be closer and hoping to be allowed to touch. The happiness of finally being able to be close to him outweighs anything else he might feel.

After a few minutes of silent contact, he builds up the courage to say something he's been wondering since Hadrian came in with his guardians. Well, since Draco dragged his eyes off Hadrian long enough to notice said guardians, at least. "May I ask you something?" he asks quietly, and Hadrian turns to him, making a soft, inquisitive sound and nodding slightly. "You really brought a submissive to negotiate with you?"

Hadrian tilts his head slightly, looking a bit confused. It's cute in a way Hadrian often isn't, being too put together and powerful for it. The confusion colours his tone slightly as he says, "Of course. Remus is one of my godfathers, and they're the only parental figures I have. Why wouldn't I?"

"Oh," Draco says quietly. Hadrian spoke as if it was obvious, and Draco can feel his cheeks heating once again in slight embarrassment. "I just thought… Even though he's a submissive?"

“That doesn’t matter to me,” Hadrian says softly, his tone gentle and warm, and no longer confused. “I trust him and care about him, like I know he cares about me, so his role in his relationship with Sirius doesn’t really matter for this. I know some people think submissives are somehow lesser in general and look down upon them -you- but I don’t. Besides, Siri and Remy would have my hide if I treated anybody as lesser because of something they can’t control.”

Draco nods, but before he has a chance to say anything, his father walks back in with Hadrian’s godfathers. He thinks he sees Remus glance at their hands and smile slightly.

“The contract is ready,” Lucius says. “Would you both like to read over it before we all sign?”

Next to Draco Hadrian nods, and Lucius hands him the paper. Draco scoots closer so they can read it at the same time.

Contract for the Courtship of Draco L Malfoy by Hadrian J Potter

Stage One - August 6, 1995

- A chaperone must be present for all outings and other time spent together, with the exception of classes or group activities
- Approved chaperones include only the following:
  - Lucius Malfoy
  - Narcissa Malfoy
  - Severus Snape
  - Blaise Zabini
- There shall be a minimum of one outing per week, which Mr Potter shall be responsible for as the courter
- Meetings shall never occur in bedchambers, bathrooms, or similarly private places
- Neither participant in this courtship shall ever be in any state of undress in the presence of the other, including but not limited to the absence of a shirt, visible undergarments,

or bathing costumes
- Physical contact shall be limited to the following:
  - Hands and arms
  - A hand to the hair of the other person
  - Short hugs, requiring express permission from both participants beforehand
  - A kiss to the hand as a greeting or farewell
  - Contact resulting from regular gameplay in Quidditch
- Both participants in this courtship are forbidden from having other romantic or physically intimate relationships
- Both participants enter this courtship of their own free will and with the approval of their parents or guardians
- Both participants hold the right to end the courtship should it not work for them
- All above rules will be in place until another contract replaces this one, or the end of the courtship, whichever should come first

Below this, there is a place for six signatures. Though it is a relatively simple and straightforward contract, Draco can't help but feel a bit overwhelmed. Courtship is a big deal, a formal version of dating with the specific intent for marriage if it works out. Somehow, it almost feels bigger than Hadrian being his mate, though he knows that's ridiculous. He must tense without realising it or something, because Hadrian gives his hand a reassuring squeeze and looks over at him.

"Does everything look alright to you?" he asks, and Draco just stares into his eyes for a moment. They are such a beautiful colour, and show his sincerity. Draco almost feels like he could fall into them.

"Yes," Draco says after a long moment, blinking himself out of his thoughts. "It looks fine."

Hadrian nods, and takes the quill Draco's father hands him to sign the contract.

Chapter End Notes

Thanks for reading. I honestly had no idea how to write that contract, so if you have any suggestions let me know and I might update it. What did I miss that they might have made rules for?

Also, when should Voldie show up in this story? Should Drarry have a chance to settle into their relationship first? There's less than a month left of summer, but should he show up before or

after they go back to school? I'll write it my way, but I'm open to suggestions on this.

Please let me know what you think in the comments below. Feedback is lovely, and comments remind me to keep writing.

Thank you all for reading!

Chapter 6

Chapter Notes

> I did modify the contract slightly after the original posting of the previous chapter. Nothing major (other than fixing the date) but you can go back and look if you want.
>
> Rating changed to "T" for minor profanity.
>
> bello = "beautiful" in Italian

See the end of the chapter for more notes

It has been four days since the negotiation meeting, and Draco is freaking out. His mother is chaperoning his first date with Hadrian today. He has no idea what to expect and cannot for the life of him decide what to wear. Blaise had offered to come over to help him get ready when Draco first told him about the date, but Draco declined, saying he would be fine. He is greatly regretting that now.

Just as he's considering Floo calling Blaise and asking if he can still come over, there's a knock on the outer door of his rooms. He's at least wearing pyjamas, so he hurries to the door and yanks it open, planning to send whichever parent is there away as quickly as possible. Except, when he sees the person on the other side of the door, it isn't one of his parents.

"Hey *bello*, I thought you might need some help getting ready," Blaise says with an easy smile. "I know you said you'd be fine, but I also know you, and know that you're probably freaking out right now. Can I help?"

Draco doesn't even answer, just grabs the other boy's sleeve and yanks him into the room, kicking the door shut behind them. "I have nothing to wear!" he says, pulling Blaise toward his closet.

Blaise chuckles in response to his words, and Draco glares at him over his shoulder. It's not funny. Blaise raises his free hand in surrender. "I'm sure we can find you something," he placates.

It takes an hour for them to find something suitable, despite Blaise's best efforts. Draco turns down almost every suggestion he makes, from a sleeveless crop top ("Pretty sure that counts as a 'state of undress'") to a robe set ("I don't even know if we'll be in the wizarding world. I

need something I could wear around Muggles") to a long-sleeved mesh top ("Father would have a heart attack if he found out I even own that!") to a waistcoat and slacks ("I don't want to look like a priss"). Blaise thinks that he's worrying too much about all of this, but he'll never say it. At least Draco is freaking out about his outfit instead of worrying about Potter rejecting him. Blaise is worried for his friend when it comes to the whole mate issue, but it doesn't do the boy any good to worry constantly. Besides, Potter seems to at least be giving him a chance and has been treating him well in the few interactions the two have had. Still, Blaise needs to meet Potter for himself soon, just to make sure. And maybe to threaten him a bit to make sure that he won't get any ideas.

Finally, Blaise pulls out a pair of black skinny jeans (Draco's parents would probably freak out if they knew how many Muggle-style clothes and casual clothes are in his closet, not to mention the party/club clothes Blaise has convinced him to buy over their shopping trips together) and a royal blue dress shirt. Blaise throws them at Draco, who catches them out of the air, looking highly offended. "Just put it on before you say anything," he tells the blond.

Draco sighs, but heads into the bathroom to change nonetheless. Blaise waits in the bedroom, the door to the walk-in closet open to reveal the mess of clothes in it from Draco's panic. After about two minutes Draco comes back out of the bathroom wearing the clothes Blaise gave him. "I don't know, Blaise. I just- are you sure?"

"Come here," Blaise sighs and waits until Draco is in front of him. "Undo the top two buttons, for one. The jeans are a definite yes, they make your arse look great."

"Blaise!" Draco says, voice squeaking as his face turns red. "You can't say things like that! Maybe I should just wear the slacks."

"Why not? It's not like there's anyone to hear. And anyway, it's true," Blaise says. "Don't wear the slacks. He won't be able to keep his eyes off of you in these. They make you look sexy without showing any skin, since you're so opposed to that."

"My Mother is chaperoning, Blaise. I shouldn't look 'sexy,'" Draco protests.

Blaise sighs at him again. "You should always look sexy on a date. Just in a less obvious way when you have a chaperone," Blaise says. He pauses, thinking, as he walks in a slow circle around Draco. "On

second thought, that shirt isn't the right colour. I'll be right back." He walks into the closet again, going directly for the button-downs. He still likes the outfit he picked, but he's not feeling the blue for today. He picks out a green shirt, pausing for a moment to pick between dark or bright green before deciding on the emerald green one. It's dark, but not dark enough to completely wash Draco out.

He has Draco go to the bathroom again to change into the green shirt, and when he comes back out, Blaise is much happier with his choice. "You look great, *bello*," Blaise says. Draco buttoned the shirt all the way up again, so Blaise steps forward and undoes the top two buttons on his own.

"Hey!" Draco protests. He tries to redo the buttons, but Blaise swats his hand away.

"I thought you didn't want to look like a priss," Blaise says with a raised eyebrow, giving Draco a pointed look. The blond blushes again, looking away, but leaving the buttons alone. "Besides, it's not a sin to show your collarbone. I know you're familiar enough with fashion to know that. And your mother is more likely to be offended by the jeans than having your top buttons undone. Now to add a jacket. Which one?" Blaise pulls out both a faded-black denim jacket and a dark grey corduroy jacket.

Draco bites his lip, looking between the two for a solid minute before pointing at the denim one. "That one, I think."

Blaise nods. "I agree. Here, put it on and look at yourself in the mirror," he says, holding the jacket out.

Draco shrugs the jacket on. It's loose and only goes to just below his ribs, leaving a stripe of green visible between the jacket and his trousers. He moves to his closet, where he has a full-length mirror. When he looks at himself, he has to admit that Blaise has done a good job. Draco wouldn't have thought to pair a formal shirt with jeans to make it more casual. Blaise has always had a better understanding of casual fashion than him, though, so it makes sense. He's good at formal fashion and partywear, not that he's ever worn the latter outside of the house, but he's completely lost when it comes to nice casual looks. Still, "It's missing something," he says, turning to look at Blaise again.

"I know," Blaise says, smiling at his friend. "You need an accessory or two. Then we can do your hair."

Blaise raids Draco's jewellery box, and they eventually settle on a simple gold chain bracelet and a small gold ring with a jade stone on the middle finger of his opposite hand. They decide against adding a gold chain around his neck. Blaise wants to add gold eyeshadow, but Draco talks him out of it, not feeling comfortable enough to wear makeup. He doesn't wear it in public very much even though he likes it because he's always worried about people's reactions. Maybe he'll feel comfortable enough with Hadrian to wear it around him someday — he certainly hopes so — but he isn't yet. Blaise styles his hair so that it's slicked to the side, instead of straight back like he usually does it, and looser than he usually has it. There's a lock falling over his forehead, though most of it is falling to one side. Draco ends up really happy with how he looks when they're done, and is infinitely grateful that Blaise showed up even though he told him not to.

"Are you staying?" Draco asks as Blaise starts tidying up their mess a little.

"No," Blaise replies gently, looking over at the blond. Draco isn't sure whether to feel disappointed or not. "I'll head home before he's due to arrive. I think that the first time I meet him, again, we should have time to talk a bit, the three of us. You just enjoy your first date, and we'll set up a time to all get together later, okay?"

"Okay," Draco says with a soft sigh. "Thanks for coming to help, even after I told you that you didn't have to. Honestly, I was thinking about Floo calling you to see if you could still come help before you showed up."

"Of course, *bello*, I'm always here if you need me," Blaise says with a smile. "Besides, as I said earlier, I know you well enough that I know you'd need me."

"Still, thank you. It means a lot," Draco says.

Hadrian takes a deep breath to dispel his nerves before taking hold of Sirius' arm. Sirius is side-along Apparating him to Malfoy Manor. He's nervous about his first official date with Draco, but he just keeps reminding himself that everything will be fine.

He's wearing a black leather jacket over a midnight blue, v-necked teeshirt with the faintly-visible outlines of flowers in a dark purple, tucked into a nice pair of straight-leg, dark-wash jeans. It's a casual outfit, but it fits his plans for the date. Besides, Remus said he should

wear something that he feels like himself in, and this outfit does that for him. Hadrian also got Remus' approval on his date idea. He thinks Sirius felt a little left out by him going to Remus for advice, but he goes to Sirius for plenty so it's even.

Hadrian and Sirius arrive outside the front gates of Malfoy Manor, once again making the walk up the long drive. A house elf answers the door when Hadrian knocks, but Lady Malfoy is in the entry room to greet them, which Hadrian appreciates.

"Hadrian, Lord Black. Welcome," Lady Malfoy says with a respectful nod to each of them, which they return. "Draco should be down in a moment." Lady Malfoy is wearing a floor-length summer dress, clearly having listened to Hadrian's suggestion not to wear robes. He hasn't told either of the Malfoys where they are going or what they will be doing yet, but wanted to make sure that they wouldn't draw too much attention in a Muggle area because of their clothes.

Draco comes down the stairs barely two minutes later, and Hadrian is impressed with his ability to dress like a Muggle. Draco looks good, his outfit is well put together and very attractive on him. Hadrian allows his eyes to rove over Draco's form once when the blond gets to the bottom of the stairs, then determinately keeps his eyes on the other's face. He notices that Draco also takes a moment to take in his outfit.

"Sorry to keep you waiting," Draco says, cheeks tinted pink.

Hadrian smiles at him and says, "It's no problem. We haven't been here long." He steps forward and takes Draco's hand briefly, giving it a light kiss. "You look nice."

Draco's cheeks go from pink to red at this comment and he looks away shyly as he says, "Thank you. You do too."

They are all quiet for a moment, and Hadrian can see Lady Malfoy internally disapproving of Draco's outfit choice, but she luckily keeps it to herself. After a moment, Sirius says, "Well, shall we get going? Since you boys can't Apparate yet, I'm just here to side-along one of you, then I'll leave you to it."

"I'll need to know where we're going to Apparate there," Lady Malfoy says, an eyebrow raised.

"The Hyde Park Apparation point in London," Hadrian says. Lady Malfoy only nods and holds out her arm to Draco. Soon, all four of

them disappear with a ‘pop’.

Chapter End Notes

I intended for this chapter to contain the date, but it's already 2,000 words, so you'll have to wait for that. I put way too much thought into what the boys should wear (did you know that there are online guides for these things? I mean, I guess it makes sense, but they were very helpful).

Please let me know what you think of this chapter, or the fic as a whole. Comments and feedback keep me writing. Also, I am open to suggestions for future dates (the first one I already have planned) if there's anything you would like them to do. Please.

Thank you all for reading.

Chapter 7

Chapter Summary

The first date!

Chapter Notes

Hope you enjoy this chapter. It's the longest one yet, and likely one of the few you'll get that are this long, so enjoy it!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The Hyde Park Apparation Point is a small, warded area with notice-me-not charms around it at the northeastern corner of the park near the Speakers' Corner, hidden in the trees. After they all land, Sirius kisses Hadrian's forehead and quietly says, "I'll see you at home. Have fun and be good."

Hadrian smirks at him. "When am I not?" he says jokingly, before kissing his godfather's cheek in return. "I will. I'll probably be home in a little over an hour, so enjoy it while it lasts." Hadrian unfortunately knows exactly how his guardians are going to take advantage of him being out of the house, especially because Remus isn't working today with it being the day after the full moon. Remus doesn't have bad full moons if Sirius is around, but he still takes the next day off of work just in case. Sirius gives him a wink before disapparating.

He turns to see Draco watching him with a curious look in his eye, and Hadrian's smirk melts into a gentle smile. "I was thinking we could walk around the park for a while. It's beautiful, and it'll give us a chance to get to know each other. There's an ice cream shoppe across the street as well, if you'd like to have a cone while we walk?" Hadrian is honestly pretty nervous because he's never even been on a date before, forget planning one, and he doesn't know what Draco likes yet. He doesn't even know if Draco's been on a date before or what he might expect — and damn, the thought of the other boy having gone on a date with someone else, even before inheriting, makes him unreasonably jealous.

"That sounds nice," comes Draco's quiet reply, his eyes slightly downward. "Could we get ice cream?"

"Of course, darling," Hadrian says, and leads the Malfoys to a small shoppe on the other side of the street from the park. "I'll get you

whatever you'd like, okay?" he says once they are there.

"Oh," Draco says, cheeks tinting pink. He looks adorable like that. "You don't have to. I mean, I can buy my own."

Hadrian shakes his head with a smile. "I want to. Besides, I'm supposed to be showing that I can provide for you, right?"

Draco mumbles a little as he says, "I guess so. But still, you don't have to. I have enough money." Draco is surprised by Hadrian's offer to pay for him. He is also embarrassed and a little bit worried because he doesn't want Hadrian to think of him as a burden at all. His family has plenty of money, so Hadrian won't have to pay for everything when they're mated. If they mate fully. He doesn't want Hadrian to decide not to fully mate with him because he thinks Draco will be a financial burden.

Hadrian's response surprises Draco, though he supposes it shouldn't because Hadrian *is* Lord Potter. "And I have more money than I'll ever be able to spend in a lifetime, even without taking into account that it's still growing. Also, it would make me feel better to pay. My instincts want me to provide for you, so hopefully it will settle them a little."

Draco blinks at him for a minute before he quietly agrees. He hadn't thought about whether Hadrian also had instincts drawing them together. He's always heard that submissives' mating instincts are stronger than those of dominants, driven by needing their dominant to survive. Draco's instincts drive him to want to be physically close to Hadrian, to trust him, and to do anything he says that could be even remotely interpreted as an instruction. Luckily the last one isn't as strong as it was at the beginning, which he thinks might be because Hadrian said he accepted him and has been spending time with him.

Hadrian buys them each an ice cream cone, the one for Draco containing two scoops. Draco's mother declines when Hadrian offers to get her one as well, and soon they are leaving the shoppe and reentering the park.

They walk in silence for a few minutes, Hadrian leading them southward and Draco's mother following a few metres behind them. His mother is far enough back that if they speak quietly she is unlikely to hear them.

Eventually, Hadrian breaks the silence, "I know I just saw you a few days ago, but how have you been?"

“I’m good, and you?” Draco responds politely. Really he’s been nervous about his mateship with Hadrian, and a little scared, and excited about the date, but he’s not going to say any of that.

“I’ve been nervous,” Hadrian admits quietly, and Draco’s head snaps to look at him. “I’ve never been on a date before, so I kept worrying that I might mess it up, especially because this date is really important. Remus helped a lot, though, and told me that the best thing I can do is to just be myself.” Hadrian smiles slightly in Draco’s direction.

“That sounds like good advice,” Draco says. He looks away before he admits quietly, “I’ve never really been on a date before either.” Hadrian’s grin in response is a little too sharp, but Draco chooses to ignore that.

They lapse into silence for a short time before Hadrian says, “You know, the Black Family Tree has begun tying us together. I just noticed it two days ago, because we don’t look at it very often. The connection is faint right now, but Sirius says it will strengthen as we move through the stages to full mateship.”

Draco is shocked, to be honest, and not just because Hadrian is speaking so casually about them being fully mated in the future as if it’s inevitable. Draco doesn’t believe, yet, that Hadrian won’t change his mind before then and leave him to die in one or two years. He supposes the deadlines will be on Hadrian’s birthday, not his, because Hadrian is younger. Even ignoring that, though, he hadn’t known that family trees would show a mateship connection in the beginning phase. He’ll have to check if the Malfoy Family Tree has done the same.

“Sorry,” Hadrian’s voice breaks through his thoughts, and Draco looks up to see the other boy watching him with a concerned expression. “I didn’t mean to overwhelm you.”

“No, it’s fine,” Draco quickly reassures, shaking his head slightly. “I was just surprised, is all.”

Hadrian nods, then says, “In that case, there’s something else I would like to say, though I worry it may overwhelm you more.” There’s a pause, and it takes Draco a minute to realise that Hadrian is waiting for his permission to continue. He nods for the other boy to keep talking. Hadrian takes a deep, audible breath before he does. “I just want to make sure you know that I do intend for us to be fully mated

by the time you turn seventeen. I'm not just toying with you, and I won't abandon you."

"Why?" Draco chokes out. Hadrian was right, his little speech is overwhelming the blond. His head is spinning, his creature is singing in happiness, and the human parts of him are confused and doubtful. "How- How can you be so sure? I mean, we don't even know each other personally." Once they are fully mated, they will both need the other, and it isn't reversible.

"Because we're mates," Hadrian says as if it's the easiest thing in the world, shrugging slightly. "Magic chose us for each other. You're mine and I'm yours. You're mine to take care of, mine to protect, and someday, mine to love."

Draco feels like his heart might beat right out of his chest. His skin feels hot, and he just knows his entire face and neck are red. His creature is purring, and Draco has to fight to keep the sound in. He thinks his human brain has temporarily shut off from the shock of Hadrian's last statement. "You… You really think you could love me?"

"Of course," Hadrian says, then he looks at Draco and both his voice and face soften, sensing the blond's insecurity. "I don't believe that Lady Magic would have chosen you for me if I couldn't love you. Sirius has taught me to trust in Her, and she's the one that bound us together." He can see Draco beginning to accept his reasoning, so he decides to lighten the mood a little. His tone is joking as he says, "Besides, I've always been a little obsessed with you. Why would I ever let you go, now that I have a chance?"

Draco lets out a short, startled laugh and Hadrian can't help but smile. It's such a beautiful sound. They are quiet for a moment, Hadrian giving Draco a moment to process, before the blond says hesitantly, "Could you maybe, um…" He trails off and doesn't complete the thought.

Hadrian pauses their walking so he can make direct eye contact with Draco for a moment, trying to get a read on his emotions. Hadrian can't really figure out what Draco is feeling through the bond — it seems to be a complicated combination of emotions — but he can sense the shorter boy's need for physical comfort. "May I hold your hand?" he asks quietly, holding out the hand that isn't holding his ice cream. He wants to be able to comfort Draco in a way that is appropriate in public, which sitting and playing with his hair likely is not.

Draco nods and takes the raven-haired boy's hand in his own, his expression one of relief. They begin walking again, this time hand-in-hand, toward the south side of the park. After a few minutes of fairly comfortable silence, Draco offers a quiet, "Thank you." Hadrian just squeezes his hand in response. After another few minutes, Draco says hesitantly, "So, er, what do you like to do in your spare time?"

Hadrian smiles at him, happy that the submissive got up the courage to start a conversation. "Well, Quiddich isn't exactly free time, but it is something I enjoy," he says. "I like cooking when we give Kreature the night off or he lets me help him. He was hesitant to let me in his kitchen at first, but now that I've shown I know what I'm doing and I really do enjoy it, he's more willing to let me help. I've also been studying Wizarding culture and magic we'll never learn at Hogwarts from the Black family library. We just live in the townhouse, but the library is connected to the one in the main Black Manor, so I have access to all kinds of books." Hadrian smiles fondly, thinking about the library, before shaking himself out of it. "What about you? How do you spend your spare time?"

Draco bites his lip, drawing Hadrian's attention to it. He has to forcibly drag his eyes and mind away from Draco's mouth, mentally scolding himself. His creature grumbles in his chest, but he reminds it that their relationship with Draco is still new, and it isn't time to think about that. Someday, he tells both himself and his creature, but not today and not any day for a few months, most likely, if not more.

Hadrian is brought out of his own thoughts by the sound of Draco's voice, soft and hesitant. "I like talking about the latest fashion trends with Blaise and going shopping with him, even though I'll probably never get to wear most of the things we buy. I play the piano sometimes. It's not my favourite thing, but it's a nice form of expression, I suppose. Not as nice as sketching, but I'm better at it. And I like spending time outside when the weather is decent enough, and sometimes even when it isn't."

"You draw?" Hadrian asks, surprised. Draco looks away shyly and nods, the pink tint returning to his cheeks. Hadrian decides to leave it at that, moving to something else he's curious about. "Is Heir Zabini your best friend?"

"Yes," Draco says quietly, glancing up at him. "Has been for years. Our parents don't exactly run in the same circles, but we would often be at the same higher society events growing up. We've only grown closer since we started Hogwarts." There's a slight pause, and just as

Hadrian is about to open his mouth to respond, Draco says quickly, “Platonically close, I mean. Just platonically.”

“I didn’t think otherwise, darling, don’t worry,” Hadrian says, giving Draco’s hand a light, reassuring squeeze. “I would like to meet him, though. He is clearly an important person in your life. I know he’s on our chaperone list, but having someone chaperone us isn’t the best way to get to know them.”

“He’d like to meet you, too. Maybe we could set up a time for the three of us to just hang out?” Draco suggests.

“That sounds like a great idea, darling. Why don’t you ask him when he would be available when you get home and let me know?” Hadrian says, and Draco nods. Around this time they arrive at the rose garden on the south side of the park and begin to wander through it slowly. Hadrian watches as Draco takes in the flower beds with a smile on his face, happy that the blond seems to be enjoying the park.

After a few minutes of comfortable quiet between them, Draco says, “You know, we never discussed what our creatures are.”

“Ah, right,” Hadrian says. He honestly had forgotten about that. “Well, I am a Dark Elf. From what I have gathered it is a fairly rare inheritance, and I’ve not been able to find much information on it. I don’t know what powers it might have given me yet. What about you?”

“I’m a Naiad, or Water Nymph. Nymphs are the most common inheritance in the Black family,” Draco says. “I have some control over water now, and supposedly I’ll be able to breathe underwater, but I haven't tried it yet. I’m a little scared to, honestly.” The last sentence is said more quietly, and even without using his mate instincts to feel Draco’s emotions, Hadrian can hear the slight fear in the blond’s voice by the end. He must be afraid of drowning. Hadrian squeezes his hand again. He wants to pull the blond into an embrace, but does not feel that it would be appropriate right now, nor that Lady Malfoy would appreciate it.

“I don’t see any reason that you have to try if you don’t want to. You should use your powers as they benefit you,” he says, gently and honestly.

“I think you will find that many people disagree with you there,” Draco says, eyes on the ground. “Many purebloods would say that I am dishonouring Lady Magic by not using the gift she gave me.”

“That’s true. But it is also true that what we do with our powers is none of their business, and you hardly need to tell them that you aren’t using your full powers,” Hadrian says, and Draco nods. After a minute, he speaks again. “May I ask you something else?”

Draco glances at Hadrian, wondering why the other boy is asking for permission this time when they have already been exchanging questions. Still, he nods, though he is nervous about what this question might be.

“You don’t have to answer if you don’t want to, but what would you like to do after we graduate?” Hadrian asks, and Draco immediately decides not to answer, but Hadrian continues before he can open his mouth. “I know you didn’t want to say last time, but I wasn’t sure if it was me that you didn’t want to tell, or your parents. If it was me, then before you say anything, I just want to make sure you know that I’m not going to prevent you from doing whatever it is as long as it will make you happy.”

“I-” Draco starts, then pauses. He knows what he wants, at least to an extent, and he shouldn’t lie to his dominant about it. His creature bristles at the very idea, upset that he would even consider such a thing. Besides, now that there’s no one to hear his hopes get turned down, isn’t it better to know? Draco takes a deep breath and tries again. “I’d like to continue my education,” he says, voice practically a whisper, his eyes trained firmly on the path in front of them. “I could get a Charms Mastery, or maybe enrol in Healer’s training. I’ve always expected to be the Head of the Malfoy Family once my father steps down, but it is very uncommon for a submissive to be given their birth House’s title, so I don’t know if I’ll still be able to.”

He glances at Hadrian out of the corner of his eye, nervous about the other boy’s reaction. Gods, this is terrifying. His whole future is on the line. Hadrian smiles at Draco, and his voice sounds fond as he says, “That sounds wonderful, darling. We can move to wherever you would like to study once we graduate. I know many people go abroad for their Mastery studies.” He squeezes Draco’s hand, and the blond’s heart warms. The fact that Hadrian would be willing to move somewhere so he could pursue a Mastery makes him happy, it makes him feel warm and cared for. After a moment of silence, Hadrian continues a little hesitantly, “Also, I know that you need my express permission to keep your title as Heir Malfoy. I can speak to your father, if you like?”

“You’d do that?” Draco asks, turning his head to look fully at the

dominant, feeling surprised. Very few dominants allow their submissives to hold their own title. The closest they are usually allowed to get is being the Lord- or Lady-Consort, like Professor Lupin and Draco's mother are. He doesn't think there are any submissives currently holding the position of a family's Head, or holding a family's seats in the Wizengamot. Still, he wouldn't be opposed to being the only submissive Lord if Hadrian allows it. "I would like that."

Hadrian smiles and squeezes his hand again. "Then it will be done."

All too soon, in Draco's opinion, it is time to head home. They ended up staying in the park for closer to an hour and a half than the originally intended hour, but Draco is glad for every minute of it. When Hadrian goes to kiss Draco's hand goodbye, Draco stops him. Hadrian gives him a confused look and Draco explains, "I would like a hug instead, if that's alright?"

"Of course, darling," Hadrian says with a smile and wraps gentle arms around him. Draco melts slightly into the embrace, head bent to bury his head in Hadrian's chest even though he isn't that much shorter. His creature trills happily inside his chest, taking in the warmth and sense of safety, and to Draco's immense embarrassment, some of the sound makes its way into the air. Luckily Hadrian doesn't laugh at him, instead stroking a hand down his back before pulling away. "Let me know what Blaise says, and I'll see you soon, darling."

Draco nods, taking a small step back. "See you soon," he repeats softly.

"Thank you for accompanying us, Lady Malfoy. It was nice to see you," Hadrian says, kissing Narcissa's hand.

"Of course, Hadrian. Do you have a way to get home?" Narcissa asks, smiling slightly at the boy. He seems to be good to her Draco, which is the fastest way to her heart.

"I do," he nods, holding up his left hand, and she notices for the first time that he has three rings on his fingers. Two on his ring finger, one the Potter Lord ring and one that seems to be a Lord ring but for a family that she doesn't recognise, with the third on his index finger being the Black heirship ring. It will be able to take him to any of the Black family properties with its embedded portkey, and she thinks that he is living at one of the Black properties with Sirius. She glances at his other hand, a move he clearly notices, and sees two more rings there, one Lord and one Heir, though she cannot make them out. Not

giving her the chance to look closer, he says, “Goodbye, Lady Malfoy. Goodbye, Draco.” He then presses his thumb to the Black ring and disappears, leaving her to wonder how he has the titles for so many different families.

Chapter End Notes

> Let me know what you think. Did Draco and Hadrian's interactions make sense? Does this make sense for a date? I literally looked up what teenagers do on dates, and a picnic/walk in the park was one of the suggestions. I've never been on a date, or even been romantically attracted to someone, so please validate whether this works, especially all you alloromantic people out there. Thank you in advance! And thank you all for reading.

Chapter 8

Chapter Summary

Lucius!

Chapter Notes

This chapter is stepping outside Harry and Draco's immediate surroundings for the first time. I hope you enjoy it.

Also, we have officially passed 500 kudos and 10,000 hits! You all are amazing. I really appreciate everybody that reads this story, especially those of you who keep coming back for more. If you remember, this was originally a one-shot, and it only became more because of the response it got.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Lucius Malfoy takes a deep breath before stepping through the Floo. He has a feeling that this will be a difficult meeting. About a minute later, he is stepping out the other side of the Floo into Severus Snape's home in Spinner's End. "Severus?" he calls out.

"Lucius," the man says, stepping into the sitting room where the Floo is located. Lucius can hear the concern in his voice only because he has known the man for so long. "Why did you request to visit? You rarely visit me here. What is so urgent that it could not wait the two days until we will see each other at the meeting?"

"Is it alright if we sit down?" Lucius asks, and though Severus nods, it clearly makes him more worried. Not that anyone else would be able to tell, of course. Once they are seated across from each other, Lucius speaks again, keeping his voice even. "You remember that Draco inherited as a submissive on his birthday this year? Well, he met his dominant a week and a half ago."

"A week and a half? And you are only telling me this now?" Severus asks. Lucius knew he would feel offended at not having been told sooner. "Do I not deserve to know when my godson has found his mate?"

"Of course you do, but I have not seen you and this is hardly news to convey in a letter. That is why I am here now," Lucius says, calming his friend down slightly. "They are on their first date now, with

Narcissa to chaperone."

"They are being chaperoned?" Severus asks. It is not nearly as common to have chaperoned dates for creature mates as it is for non-creatures in high society. Mostly because purity if the relationship doesn't work out is not an issue.

Lucius is unsure how to explain this. "Yes, well, the boy thought that formally courting and having chaperones might make Draco more comfortable around him. They listed you as a potential chaperone."

"Who is it?" Severus asks, clearly trying to think through the possibilities in his head. "He has to be in Draco's year if he inherited this summer, right? Unless he goes to a different school?"

"It's Harry Potter, Severus," Lucius says. He knows this won't go over well with his friend, but he cannot avoid telling him. "Lord Potter, now."

"No. Please tell me you are messing with me," Severus says, somewhat desperately.

Lucius shakes his head. "I would not joke about this, Severus. Trust me, I do not like it any more than you do."

"They have never gotten along, Lucius. You don't know what they are like at school; they're awful to each other. Granted, Draco is worse, but still. What if Potter treats him badly, or even doesn't care for him?" Severus says, putting voice to all of Lucius' biggest worries. Lucius is terrified for his son and knows that Severus now feels the same. "And what of our Lord? You will have to tell Him, Lucius. You cannot keep something like this from Him."

"I know, Severus. Trust me, I wouldn't think of trying. I will speak with Him at the next meeting," Lucius says. He knows that trying to keep this from his Lord would be a death sentence for him and likely his family. "We can only hope that He does not decide to use Draco to get to the boy once He knows, and that He does not hold it against Draco."

Severus pales dramatically, seeming to have not yet thought of the possibility himself. They are both loyal to their Lord, yes, but that does not mean they would be able to stand by if he decided to hurt Draco. "You are right, we must hope it does not come to that," Severus says. If they have to choose between Draco and their Lord, there is no guarantee of what they will choose.

The next Death Eater meeting is two days later. Lucius was glad to hear that Draco's date with Potter went well, from both Narcissa and Draco himself, but Lucius is worried about his Lord's reaction. Both his wife and son give him a kiss on the cheek before he steps out of the Manor. Once past the wards, he presses into his Dark Mark, activating its transport function. No Death Eater, Inner Circle or not, is allowed to know the location of their meeting place. It is unplottable, and none of them ever see what the world around the place looks like.

When Lucius arrives, there are only about ten other Death Eaters in the room. It is not the throne room, where full meetings are held. Instead, it is what seems to be an old dining room, with a very long wooden table that the twenty-four Inner Circle members sit at during these smaller meetings. The Dark Lord sits in a throne-like chair at the head of the table, and the seating along the rest of the table is based on who is currently in the best standing with their Lord.

Lucius immediately moves to kneel before Him. He sinks to both knees before the man, his head bowed and hands behind his back. He does not move or say anything, waiting to be acknowledged.

"Ah, Lucius. Welcome," his Lord says.

"If I may, my Lord," Lucius says quietly, then pauses a moment to see if he will be punished for speaking out of turn before he continues, "I would like to speak with you privately after the meeting."

"You cannot speak here instead?" the Dark Lord asks, voice cold but seeming to hold the slightest hint of curiosity.

Lucius swallows, but his quiet voice is steady as he replies, "I would prefer to relay this only to you, if you will allow it, my Lord."

The Dark Lord is silent for a moment, and Lucius braces for his request to be denied, sure that the man will see no reason to indulge him. Eventually, the Dark Lord says, "Very well, Lucius. Stay after the meeting. You may take your seat now."

"Thank you, my Lord," Lucius says, and slowly rises to his feet. He walks around the table, looking for where his name has been placed today; he only hopes it will not be too far down. He has to walk around the other side of the table to find his seat, and is pleased to see that it is only five seats down from the head of the table. Less than halfway is always a good sign.

The meeting seems to go unbearably slow, and Lucius has trouble paying attention to the meeting itself. Luckily his distraction does not seem to be too obvious, as no one has called him out on it, though Severus gives him multiple looks over the course of the meeting.

Finally, it is over, and everyone rises to leave. Each Death Eater stops to bow to the Dark Lord before making their way to the door. Severus gives Lucius one last look as he leaves, and Lucius buries his nerves behind his Occlumency shields, keeping a calm mask over his face. His shields would never hold up against the Dark Lord, and even trying would wreck his sanity, but they don't need to. He only wants to ensure that his fellow Inner Circle members cannot see how nervous he is.

Once the last of his fellow Death Eaters have left, the Dark Lord turns to him. Lucius bows his head as a sign of respect, but before he can move to kneel in front of Him, the Dark Lord speaks. "Let us move to my study, Lucius. Follow me."

The Dark Lord rises from his throne, and Lucius follows him through marble-floored corridors, keeping his head bent downward. They arrive at a fairly normal-looking study. There is a large, ornate writing desk in the centre of the room, with two chairs in front of it and one nicer chair behind it. Off to the side are a few armchairs situated in front of a fireplace. "Take a seat, Lucius," the Dark Lord says, gesturing to the chairs in front of the desk as he moves to sit behind it.

Lucius bows deeply before doing as asked. "Thank you, my Lord."

The Dark Lord studies him with deep red eyes, His face unreadable as always. After a minute or so, He says, "What is it you wish to speak to me about, Lucius? It must be important for you to request that we speak in private."

"Yes, my Lord," Lucius says, then takes a breath to steady himself. "Harry Potter inherited as a dominant creature on his fifteenth birthday, nearly two weeks ago."

"I see," the Dark Lord says slowly. "What else, Lucius? I can tell that is not all you have to say."

Lucius is almost surprised, but knows he shouldn't be. The Dark Lord knows him too well. "He is the magic-chosen mate of my son Draco, my Lord. Draco will not be able to survive without him," the blond says, voice barely above a whisper.

“Show me,” the Dark Lord demands, and Lucius raises his eyes to meet red ones, dropping all of his Occlumency shields.

Lucius purposefully shows the Dark Lord certain memories, starting with the moment he discovered who Draco’s dominant mate was. He shows the Dark Lord the lunch his family shared with the boy, and then the negotiation meeting with Potter, Black, and Lupin. Lastly, he shows his discussion with Severus two days prior, not wanting to seem as if he is trying to hide anything. When he is done, the Dark Lord searches around in his memories a bit to make sure he is not attempting to hide any information. Then, the Dark Lord leaves his head.

The Dark Lord is quiet for a long moment. Lucius sits in front of him, trying not to let his nervousness show, even without Occlumency shields to hide it behind. Eventually, the Dark Lord says, “I will take time to consider what to do with this information. In the meantime, I want you to gather what information you can about him and report back to me. Get information from your son as well. This will allow you to send me written reports at any time. Simply toss the parchment into a fire when you are done and I will receive it.” He holds out a pad of parchment, which Lucius takes.

“My Lord,” Lucius whispers nervously. “Please do not punish Draco for this. He did not choose to be tied to Potter.”

“I understand your concerns, Lucius, but I cannot guarantee anything. If it becomes necessary to use your son as collateral against Potter, I will. With the right information, however, it may not be necessary. I suggest that you get me that information,” the Dark Lord says.

Lucius swallows and says, “Of course, my Lord. Thank you for the chance.”

“Send any information as soon as you discover it, Lucius. You are dismissed.”

Lucius rises from his chair. He bows to his Lord, then silently makes his way to the door. That went about as well as he could hope. Now he needs a drink, and to speak with Severus.

Chapter End Notes

> Thank you all for reading. I have finally introduced another plotline that isn't relationship-based. I hope the perspective in this chapter worked.

Please let me know what you think. What do you think of this version of Voldemort so far? Is he too lenient with Lucius?

Is there anything you would like to see going forward? subplots or individual scenes? Let me know and I'll consider it!

Chapter 9

Chapter Summary

The meeting with Blaise.

Chapter Notes

Sorry for the long wait. To avoid an even longer wait, and because I'm lazy, this chapter has not been edited. If there are any mistakes, especially large ones, please (politely) let me know in the comments below.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Blaise Zabini is at Malfoy Manor again, only four days after his last visit. This time, however, he is not just here for Draco. Today, he will be introduced to Draco's dominant, Lord Hadrian Potter. He's seen the other boy around school, but never actually spoken to him. He was never important to Blaise's life before, especially because his family is neutral in the war. Now, however, the boy will be part of his personal life. Draco is Blaise's best friend, and he wants to make sure that Potter will treat him well.

He makes his way to the sitting room Draco said they'll be using and finds Draco fidgeting nervously on one of the couches. He looks good, in a soft way. The blue robe he's wearing makes him look less sharp than usual, and Blaise thinks he looks young, especially with the way he's showing his nerves, not realising that anyone is watching him. "Hey, Draco," Blaise says quietly, and Draco startles a little, straightening his spine as he looks up at Blaise.

"Hi," the blond says with a visibly tense smile, rising to greet him.

"I'm sure this meeting will go well, *bello* , there's nothing to worry about," Blaise says, leaning forward to kiss the other boy's cheek, keeping his tone firm and reassuring.

Draco lets out a nervous laugh, saying, "It won't be so 'fine' if you call me that in front of him. Dominants tend to be possessive, you know, especially this early."

"He'll have to get used to it eventually," Blaise points out, raising an eyebrow. "I'm not going to stop calling you ' *bello* ' just because he's possessive."

Draco gives a small, but much more real smile. He says, “I know, just maybe… give him a chance to warm up to you before you set off his instincts, yeah?”

“I’ll try,” Blaise concedes, and accordingly moves to sit in an armchair. They only have to wait a few minutes before Potter shows up.

When a house elf shows Hadrian into the sitting room where he is meeting with Draco and Zabini, both boys stand to greet him. Hadrian smiles at Draco first, placing a light kiss on the back of his hand. “It’s good to see you, darling. You look nice,” he murmurs quietly, and sees a pretty pink spread on Draco’s cheeks. He doesn’t think he’ll ever get tired of Draco having that reaction to his words. “Would you like to introduce us?”

Draco nods and says, “Hadrian, this is my best friend Heir Blaise Zabini. Blaise, meet my dominant, Lord Hadrian Potter.”

“Well met, Heir Zabini,” Hadrian says, offering his hand.

Zabini shakes the offered hand, raising an eyebrow at the presence of two family rings on his hand. “Well met, Lord *Potter* ,” he says, a questioning quality to his voice on the name “Potter.”

“It’s the Black Heir ring,” Hadrian says, answering the implied question. “But really, just call me Hadrian. I have a feeling we’re going to be seeing a lot of each other now, it would be silly to keep up the formality of titles in a private setting.”

“Of course,” Zabini says. “Feel free to call me Blaise.”

Hadrian nods. “Thank you. Shall we sit down?” he says, glancing at Draco.

Draco seems a little flustered as he says, “Of course. I mean, yes. I mean…” Hadrian reaches out to take his hand gently, squeezing it comfortingly. He goes to let go but finds Draco holding on and is perfectly happy to keep holding hands as long as Draco wants. Draco takes a visible breath before he says, much more composed, “The house elves have prepared a tea service, which can be sent up whenever we’re ready.”

“That sounds nice. Would you prefer to have it now or later? Either is

fine with me," Hadrian says, technically to the room but mostly to Draco.

"I…" Draco hesitates, glancing at him then Blaise and back again. "I think I'd prefer now, if you're both alright with that."

They both glance at Blaise, who says, "Sounds good to me."

"Sounds like a plan, then," Hadrian says, using his hand clasped around Draco's to guide the other boy to a couch while Blaise sits in an armchair across from them. Draco snaps twice and the tea service appears on the low table between them, a proper afternoon low tea.

There is relative silence for a few minutes as they each make a cup of tea to their own preferences. Once they are all sipping at their drinks, Hadrian looks at Blaise and says, "Draco mentioned that you are interested in fashion?" Hyperaware of Draco, he notices the boy looking at him in surprise that he remembered.

Blaise also blinks at him in what Hadrian assumes is surprise. "Yes," he says after a moment. "If I work after Hogwarts, I think I would like to do fashion design, freelance of course. Wizarding fashion is severely lacking in non-formal partywear."

"I see," Hadrian says with a small smile. "Is partywear what you would want to design, then?"

"Among other things, it is just the area I am most interested in and the one that is most lacking. I would also be willing to do casual and formal wear," Blaise explains.

"Ah," Hadrian agrees with a nod, wondering now. Perhaps Draco would like to have wedding robes designed by his friend in a few years, assuming that they have a Wizarding wedding in addition to their mating. Most mated pairs have some sort of wedding, or at least a reception, to announce their union to the world, but they won't have to.

"What about you? Is there anything you would like to do after we finish Hogwarts, other than family duties of course?" Blaise asks.

Hadrian shakes his head. "Honestly, I think I'll be pretty busy with just my family duties, and I certainly have plenty of money. Perhaps some charity work, though I'm not really sure," Hadrian says, before glancing at Draco. "We might go abroad for a few years if Draco decides he wants to study for a Mastery somewhere else."

“You’re going to get a Mastery?” Blaise asks Draco with a raised eyebrow, and Hadrian can hear the clearly pointed question. Submissives rarely further their education even if they do get jobs after graduation, partially because most doms aren’t *that* supportive.

Draco glances between Hadrian and Blaise a few times before he says, “I’m thinking about it. I’m not sure yet.”

“Whatever you decide. You don’t have to decide for a few years, and even then, you can always change your mind later,” Hadrian whispers reassuringly, accompanying the statement with a gentle squeeze to the blond’s hand.

They move on to lighter topics for a while, Quidditch teams and book preferences and the like.

About half an hour later, Draco says, “I need to use the loo. I’ll be right back.”

“We’ll be fine here, darling. See you in a few minutes,” Hadrian says, and Blaise nods his agreement. They both listen for Draco to be out of hearing range, and Hadrian casts a light silencing charm. “Go ahead, I doubt we have long before he’s back,” he says to Blaise with a raised eyebrow.

“You already know what I’m going to say, don’t you?” Blaise asks with a sigh.

Hadrian nods. “The premise, at least.”

“It’s not as fun when you know it’s coming,” Blaise pouts, and Hadrian simply stares at him. “Fine. If you hurt him, I will end you, and believe me, I won’t get caught. You don’t have a mother like mine without picking up a few things.” A pause, then, “Except that he’ll still need you. I suppose I’ll just have to cut off the offending appendage, then. Or maybe castrate you. Whichever I feel like at the time.”

Hadrian nods in acceptance. “If I hurt him, I’ll let you,” he says, and sticks his hand out to shake.

Blaise practically gapes at him, pureblood mask nowhere in sight. His voice is incredulous as he says, “You would bind yourself to that?”

“I would,” Hadrian says, hand still out in offering. “I never want to hurt him. If I ever do, I will deserve whatever punishment you see fit. So, what do you say?”

“Okay, I’ll take your oath,” Blaise says, pulling out his wand as he clasps Hadrian’s hand at the wrist.

“I, Hadrian Jameson Potter, swear that should I hurt Draco Lucius Malfoy in any way, I shall accept whatever punishment Blaise Zabini sees fit to give me. I give him the right to punish me if I commit this offence, and give up my right to press charges for any harm caused to myself as or during said punishment,” Hadrian says, making sure to cover everything he can think of.

“I, Blaise Zachary Zabini, accept this oath, and swear to hear Hadrian Potter’s defence, should he commit the aforementioned offence, before passing judgement on him,” Blaise responds.

Together, they say, “So mote it be.” Magic flares around their clasped hands in the form of a silverish-white light.

Less than a minute after the light fades and Hadrian takes down the silencing charm, Draco returns. He glances cautiously between them before saying slowly, “He threatened you, didn’t he?”

“Only if I hurt you, which I don’t plan on doing,” Hadrian says honestly. Draco only nods slowly, but he takes his seat next to Hadrian again, and the three of them fall into comfortable conversation for a while longer.

“Is your father home?” Hadrian asks when the three of them are done talking. Blaise needs to return home, so the meeting must come to an end.

Draco blinks at him, looking adorably confused. “He should be in his study. Why?”

“I told you I’d speak to him about your heirship,” Hadrian says with a soft smile. “I thought now might be a good time, seeing as I am already here. If you have changed your mind or would rather that I wait, I don’t have to speak to him today.”

“No, I… I’d appreciate that,” Draco says. “Shall I call a house elf to show you the way? I would do it myself, but with Blaise leaving…”

“I understand. A house elf will be fine, darling,” Hadrian says. Before he follows the small creature down the hall, he kisses Draco’s hand. “It was lovely to see you, Draco. I’ll owl you about when I can take you

out again, okay?”

“Okay. It was good to see you too,” Draco says, the cute blush back on his cheeks.

Chapter End Notes

Thank you all for reading I hope you liked this chapter.

Please let me know what you think below. Do you like Blaise's character? What do you think about his shovel talk? How do you think the meeting with Lucius will go?

Chapter 10

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Lucius looks up when there is a knock on the door to his study. He isn't sure who it could be; Narcissa would knock once then let herself in, Draco would call out after knocking, and most people that would call on him for business would come through the Floo in his study.

"Come in," he calls after putting the parchments he was going over back into a folder. Whoever is at the door, they don't need to see what he was working on. Lucius has a hard time keeping his face neutral when Hadrian Potter appears in the doorway, shock trying to force its way onto his face. "Lord Potter. What can I do for you?"

"Lord Malfoy," the boy says, tipping his head respectfully. "I was hoping to speak with you before I leave, if you have time."

Lucius can't think of what Potter would want to speak with him about privately, but all he says is, "Of course. Please, take a seat. What did you wish to speak about?"

The boy raises an eyebrow, green eyes seeming to glint in amusement. "Draco," he says, in a tone that makes it clear that it should be obvious, which Lucius supposes it probably should be. "More specifically, about his role as your heir." The boy's face gives nothing away about which way this conversation will go, though there are really only two possibilities. Either he wants Draco to keep his heirship or he doesn't, though the latter is more likely.

"Oh, what about it?" Lucius says, careful to also give none of his thoughts away in either his tone or his expression.

Potter rolls his eyes, which is the most immature action Lucius has seen from him since this all started. It reminds him that the boy is just that — a boy. Slightly younger than his own son, even. "Let's not play games, Lord Malfoy. We both know that whether he stays your heir or not is dependent on me giving permission for it," the boy says, and Lucius still cannot tell which direction he is leaning. "I have a question for you, if you'll answer honestly."

Lucius is surprised by the sudden change of topic and blinks for a moment before regaining his composure and nodding. "So long as

your question is not outrageous, I will likely answer."

"Good." The boy watches Lucius closely as he says, "My question is this: if I were to give permission, would you keep Draco as your heir? Knowing that there has not been a submissive member of the Wizengamot in nearly a century? Knowing that there are people who would think less of you for it?"

Lucius is silent for a long moment, deciding how to word his answer. Again, the boy has managed to surprise him. "I would," he says slowly. "Draco is my son, my only child. He has been raised to be able to lead our family; his being a submissive doesn't change that I know he would do well at it. People will look down upon the fact that my only child is a submissive whether he remains my heir or not, though I agree it will be worse if he remains the heir. My family is still powerful enough that they will not risk saying anything outright, though, for fear of me going after them, socially, politically, or financially. It would be difficult for Draco, being the only submissive Heir, and someday the only submissive Lord, but I believe he would be able to handle it. If you allow it and he wants to, that is."

"He does want to," Hadrian says quietly. His eyes, recently closed off and calculating, have softened considerably. "I have already spoken to him about it. He told me he would like to keep his heirship. I promised him it would be done, so I'm glad you are in agreement."

"You are giving permission, then?" Lucius says, just to confirm.

Potter nods. "Yes. I give permission for Draco Malfoy, as my submissive mate, to hold the heirship of the Malfoy family with the understanding that he will someday become the Lord of the Malfoy family," he says, voice steady the whole time.

"You are an interesting young man, Lord Potter," Lucius says cautiously. He's not quite sure what to make of Potter, but he will be cautious. This man holds his son's fate in his hands.

The boy shrugs casually, relaxing back into his chair slightly. "I take care of what is mine, Lord Malfoy, and that now includes Draco," he says. "He will want for nothing if it is within my power to provide, and he will have all the best in life. And if anyone hurts him, then Merlin help them because I will not hold back." The intensity in the boy's voice is almost scary, especially since it is clear that he means every word. The air tingles with magic and Potter's green eyes are even brighter than usual, more like the killing curse than their usual

emerald colour. His shoulders rise and fall once, slowly, as he takes a breath. With it, his eyes dim to their normal colour and the magic in the air settles. “He is in good hands with me. You can be sure of that, Lord Malfoy,” he says, voice much calmer.

Lucius studies him for a long moment. Eventually, he says, “I hope so.”

Potter nods once. “Thank you for your time, Lord Malfoy. I should take my leave.”

“Of course, Lord Potter,” Lucius says. He watches as the boy stands and leaves the room, closing the door quietly behind him.

Once he is alone, Lucius slumps back in his chair with a sigh. He runs a tired hand over his face, trying to think. He doesn’t know why, but he thinks Potter was sincere when he said Draco will want for nothing. Lucius wants to believe it, but he knows he needs to stay cautious. He and Narcissa need to look out for Draco’s safety and happiness because Draco is already taken with Potter, most of his caution seemingly gone. Lucius knows that a large part of it is Draco’s instincts insisting that he should trust Potter and has nothing to fear from the dominant.

With another sigh, Lucius remembers that he is supposed to be reporting back to the Dark Lord about Potter as soon as he learns anything. It looks like he has a report to write before he can get back to his paperwork.

Chapter End Notes

Please let me know what you think. Do you like Lucius' perspective? Should I use it more? What do you think of this side of Hadrian? Comments are love!

Chapter 11

Chapter Notes

> Sorry it's been so long. I really didn't mean to go so long without updating, but my brain decided to only let me work on other things. Speaking of, I have a tumble page now if anyone wants to check out my drawings (https://www.tumblr.com/silverrosesanddragons).

See the end of the chapter for more notes

> Dear Draco,
>
> I am hoping you will be free this Friday, the 18th, for a date, along with a chaperone. I was thinking that I might show you my home, as you have shown me yours, if you would be comfortable with this. I could give you a tour, and we could spend time in the games room. If you wanted we could have lunch or tea with my godfathers, though the elves could send the meal to us if you would rather. If you do choose to visit my home, I ask that your mother chaperone. As she is a Black by blood, it will be easier to let her into the wards than any of the others. The Black ancestors were a bit… overzealous when it comes to the wards on the house.
>
> If you would not be comfortable visiting my home at this time, perhaps we could go out for tea. I do not want you to feel pressured into visiting my home. The choice is completely up to you.
>
> Please let me know which you prefer and when you and a chaperone are available. If Friday does not work for you, then we will find another day that does.
>
> Yours always,
>
> Hadrian

Draco's heart flutters in his chest at the sign-off — *always* — before he heads off to find his mother. Once he confirms that she will be available, he quickly pens two letters. The first is to Hadrian, letting him know that Draco will gladly visit his home and have tea with his godfathers, while the second is to Blaise, asking for help getting ready again. If it is to be his first personal interaction with his mate's

godfathers — guardians — he will need to make a good impression.

“Hadrian, calm down. Everything will be fine,” Sirius says, hand firmly on Hadrian’s shoulder to stop his pacing. The boy is more anxious than he should be, more than he was even before his first date with Draco. He’s been pacing for ten minutes and he keeps raising a hand and stopping just before it goes through his hair, though he didn’t stop a few times and his hair is a little messier than normal now. “Kreature cleaned the whole house and checked it over twice. Any potentially dangerous artefacts are behind warded glass, as they always are. Everything for tea is prepared already, and I’m sure my cousin and I can keep each other company while the two of you talk.”

“What if he doesn’t like the house?” Hadrian asks, the nervousness in his voice unmasked. Sirius appreciates that Hadrian doesn’t often mask his emotions from him and Remus when they are alone.

“Then he doesn’t like the house,” Sirius says simply. Honestly, Hadrian is obviously not thinking clearly right now. “You have plenty of other houses to choose from once you graduate, and if none of those are suitable then you can buy one or have one built. Besides, Remus and I will probably continue living here, so you wouldn’t want to live here anyway.”

“Right,” Hadrian says quietly, nodding to himself and taking a deep breath. “Right.” He’s being irrational, this isn’t any bigger of a deal than him visiting Malfoy Manor. He just needs to stay calm and collected. Yes, he needs to have an important conversation with Draco, but it will be fine.

A few minutes later the Floo dings and Sirius moves forward to let the occupants through the wards. Draco and Lady Malfoy step through a moment later. “Welcome to our home Lady-Consort Malfoy, Heir Malfoy,” Sirius says formally, and Hadrian steps forward to stand just behind him to the left.

“Thank you for having us, Lord Black and Lord Potter-Heir Black,” Lady Malfoy says, her smile polite but not particularly warm as she greets them, letting Sirius kiss her hand.

Hadrian's eyes are stuck on Draco, who looks as beautiful as ever in a casual, purplish-grey robe. His grey eyes take in Hadrian with just as much intensity.

“So, what are we doing first?” Lady Malfoy asks after a minute of watching them, causing both of the boys to tear their eyes away from the other. A blush appears on both of their cheeks, though Draco’s is much more visible with his pale skin.

“I’ll give you both a tour of the main parts of the house, though I’m sure you remember much of it, Lady Malfoy. First, though,” Hadrian says, turning to Draco, “I have something for you.” He pulls a small box out of his robe pocket, holding it out to the blond boy.

“Oh. You didn’t have to,” Draco says, the blush on his cheeks deepening from pink to red.

“I know, but I found it in one of my vaults and wanted to offer it to you,” Hadrian says.

Draco glances from him to the box. Slowly lifting off the lid, he gasps. Inside is a bangle bracelet about four centimetres wide. Lifting it out of the box, Draco sees that there are birds etched into each side facing the centre, which appear to be crows. Both crows have an eye in a black stone that looks like obsidian and are holding a small red stone in their beaks, maybe a garnet or ruby. In the centre is a pomegranate with more of the little red stones set into it on either side of a small division down the centre of the fruit, as if it is showing a pomegranate cut right down the centre and the stones are the seeds. He stares at the bracelet in his hands for a long minute, silent, before he glances up at Hadrian, sure his awe is showing on his face.

Hadrian’s smile at him is fond and indulgent, eyes soft. “It is a courting bracelet from the Peverell family which is only used by the current Lord or Heir. It has a number of protective enchantments on it. I thought you might wear it, but only if you want to.”

“You hold a Peverell title?” Draco asks, tilting his head slightly. He didn’t know that Hadrian is related to the Peverells at all, and certainly not that he holds a title for the family.

Hadrian nods and says, “I’m the current Peverell Lord.” He holds his left hand out toward Draco and points to a ring on his ring finger. Sure enough, there is a very similar image of a crow holding a red stone on the ring, though instead of the crow having an obsidian eye, there is an obsidian stone on each side of the etching.

“Oh, okay,” Draco says quietly, glancing at the other ring on Hadrian’s left ring finger, though he’s not familiar with the symbol and doesn’t have long to study it before Hadrian drops his hand again. “I… I

would like to wear it," he says hesitantly but honestly. He likes the idea that he would have proof that he really is Hadrian's when the doubts creep in, though they don't come as often as they did before the first date that Hadrian took him on. His instincts still start telling him after they haven't seen each other for more than a day that Hadrian's attention could get caught by someone else if he doesn't remind the dominant how *good* he is. He doesn't really think that Hadrian would become interested in someone else, but it's hard to ignore his instincts. Having a version of a claim from Hadrian should help a lot.

Hadrian's smile widens. "May I put it on you?" he asks, and Draco nods. The bracelet is gently lifted from his hands, and he holds his left hand out. Hadrian slips the bracelet over Draco's hand and it magically shrinks down to fit, tight enough not to slip off but not tight enough to be uncomfortable with the stiff metal. "There. It will come off and go back on easily enough if you ever want or need to take it off, but no one will be able to take it from you. It will only come off by either my hand or yours, to prevent both theft and the removal of the protections."

Draco bites his lip a little, feeling overwhelmed, before he asks, "May I hug you?"

"Of course, darling," Hadrian says, voice fond, and opens his arms. Draco slots himself between them, melting against the dominant's chest as his arms come up to hold the blond close, his arms wrapping around Hadrian tightly. He buries his face in Hadrian's neck and feels the taller boy nuzzle his hair lightly. A trill escapes Draco, and he would be embarrassed about it if not for the answering happy rumble from Hadrian's chest. He can feel the vibrations where their bodies are pressed together. They hold each other until there is a quiet cough from behind him. Draco is surprised that his mother didn't break them up sooner, but when he turns around to see Lord Black glaring at Narcissa it makes more sense. Hadrian's godparents are creature mates themselves, so Lord Black likely understands what the two boys are feeling better than Draco's parents ever will, no matter how hard they try.

"Shall we start on the tour, then?" Narcissa asks, and her voice is polite though she is looking pointedly at the small amount of space between Hadrian and Draco's bodies.

"Of course, Lady Malfoy," Hadrian says, and offers his elbow to Draco in a very formal, gentlemanly manner.

Chapter End Notes

Let me know what you think of the chapter. I put way too much thought into the details of the jewellery. Is it descriptive enough?

Also, in case you didn't catch it, I put the date in this chapter to remind us how little time has passed. This story started on the 31st of July, and this most recent chapter takes place on the 18th of August.

Chapter 12

Chapter Summary

> Hadrian finally discusses his Magical Signature and Inheritance Tests with Draco.

Chapter Notes

> I didn't feel the need to copy-paste the tests into this chapter. If you need a refresher on what they say, they can be found in Chapter 3.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Hadrian leads Draco around the first two floors of the house, Narcissa and Sirius following after them. Narcissa can't object to Hadrian leading her son around by the elbow, as much as she would like to, because it is a formal and perfectly socially acceptable form of contact, as well as being covered under the contact allowances in their contract. Still, she does not have to be pleased about the lack of space between them, regardless of how comfortable her son looks.

From everything she has seen of them and everything Draco has told her, Hadrian sounds like a good dominant, but she can't trust it. She doesn't know if she will ever be able to trust it after what happened to her sister, and even Reggie. She doesn't understand why Lady Magic makes submissives so reliant on their dominants, especially with how badly she has seen submissive/dominant relationships go for those she cares about.

After about half an hour, they come to the games room. "Here we are," Hadrian says, smiling at his mate. "We have about an hour before Remus gets home, so the plan is to hang out in here until then. We can have tea once he gets back from work."

"Come on, Cissa, let's play Cribbage," Sirius says, moving past the two boys in the doorway.

Lady Malfoy follows more slowly. "Oh, I don't know, Sirius, I haven't played in years."

Hadrian turns to Draco, ignoring the adults. "I was hoping to talk to you. There are some things I would like you to know, in the name of honesty. Is that okay?"

Draco blinks at him before he nods slowly. “Yeah, sure.”

“Okay,” Hadrian leads Draco to a table on the opposite side of the room as the parents, where he left the parchments in preparation for this conversation. He glances cautiously at Narcissa, a move he can tell Draco notices. “Would you be okay with me using an anti-eavesdropping charm? It’s just that I’d rather what I’m about to tell you stays private, I’m not ready for others to know.”

Draco nods but is feeling more nervous now. What could Hadrian have to tell him that his mother can’t know? He watches Hadrian wave his hand and murmur something, not even using his wand to put the ward up. It is incredibly impressive and kind of makes Draco want to swoon at the display of power and control, but he pushes the thought away.

“So, I’ve actually been wanting to talk about this for a while, since the first day really, but there never seemed to be a good time. So I thought I should make the time,” Hadrian says, sitting in a grey armchair and gesturing to the one across from him. He picks up two parchments and holds one out to Draco. “First, this is my inheritance test.”

Draco blinks slowly before he finds his voice. “That is incredibly private. Are you sure you want to show me? You really don’t have to,” he says, not reaching out to take it.

“I’m sure,” Hadrian says, shaking his head slightly with a fond smile. “You are my mate. Since we are going to spend the rest of our lives together, you have a right to know what families you are joining. Please?”

“Okay,” Draco says after a long moment, ignoring the whole ‘ *rest of our lives’* part for now and reaching out slowly for the parchment. He turns it over and quickly scans through it, seeing five family titles listed. Black and Potter he already knew about, and Hadrian mentioned Peverell earlier, but it is the other two that surprise him. “You’re the Slytherin heir by conquest? How does that work? And I’ve never heard of the Mors family, but for a Lord to be chosen by Magick is extremely rare.”

“I know,” Hadrian says. He is watching Draco’s face closely for a reaction. “In the Slytherin family, according to the family charter, if there is no direct or clear heir, another member of the family can gain the heirship by magically besting the current Heir apparent, or

equalling the current Lord if there is no Heir apparent. The Slytherin line does not allow direct Lordship through conquest to prevent family members from killing the Lord to get the title." He pauses, and Draco nods, showing that he understands. Every family's rules of inheritance are different, based on the magically binding family charter.

Hadrian takes a deep breath before he continues; the next part is a lot more shocking, and he has to be honest that he's worried about the blond's response to it. After a long pause, he continues, "The Mors family has not had an heir in many generations, and the family was thought to have died out, which is likely why you haven't heard of them. The Mors family are the descendants of Mordred, the bastard son of King Arthur. From what I've been able to find in the archives of the family vault, the family line starts with him because he was denied claim to both his birth father's and his stepfather's family titles and holdings, with the title of prince being stripped away from him as a teenager when his stepfather found out Mordred was not actually his son. There are even rumours that Arthur cursed Mordred so that no descendant of his could ever hold the Pendragon throne, but it isn't clear how accurate that is. But yeah, that's basically the history of the Mors family."

There's a long pause after Hadrian finishes speaking, and he has to fight the urge to fidget nervously. He is a lord thrice over, fidgeting in his seat like a kid will not make people take him seriously. He watches closely for Draco's reaction, but his expression seems schooled. Hadrian is just starting to consider using the whole *feel-his-submissive's-emotions* thing to get a read on how Draco is feeling about this information when the blond finally speaks up. "So you are the head of a family line that dates back to the reign of Merlin and King Arthur, and technically descended from Arthur himself?"

"Um, pretty much, yeah," is all Hadrian can think to say.

Draco takes a deep breath. The number of families Hadrian is Lord or Heir of was impressive even before Draco knew what most of the families were, but this? The noble families dating back to Arthur's reign are all thought to have died out or merged with other noble families, so for one to make a reappearance now, and in a Muggle-raised half-blood no less, will certainly stir things up for Wizarding society and Politics. Eventually, he says, his voice faint to his own ears, "Alright. Is there any other crazy family history I should know? What about the Peverell family? The name sounds familiar, but I can't place it."

“Right,” Hadrian says, and his eyes dart to the courting bracelet on Draco’s wrist. “You’ve heard the Tale of Three Brothers?” Draco nods, not sure what this has to do with anything. “Well, they were Peverells. I’m descended from the youngest brother, and I actually own the Cloak of Invisibility.” Draco blinks rapidly. That’s almost as impressive as being descended from Arthur, though not quite. “Many of the Peverells had a natural ability for necromancy, though that seems to have skipped me. Almost all Peverells had dark cores, though, and so did most of the Mors from what I could find.”

There’s another long silence, and Draco can feel Hadrian’s eyes on him even without looking. He feels… happy, that Hadrian trusts him enough to share this information with him, and warm because Hadrian wants to be honest with Draco, because he thinks Draco has a right to know. And he feels a bit overwhelmed because this is a lot of information and Hadrian’s titles are even more impressive than he previously thought. Draco’s mate may very well end up being the most powerful person in the Wizengamot when he’s ready to take his seats. Draco knows he should say something, but he has no idea what. How should someone react to this kind of information? Should he show that he is suitably impressed by Hadrian’s titles? That doesn’t *seem* to be what Hadrian is going for. Should he offer reassurances that Hadrian’s titles don’t intimidate him? Does it even matter if they do, with how he’s stuck with the other boy either way?

Apparently, Draco takes too long to answer because, after a few long minutes, Hadrian says gently, “Do you have any more questions?”

Draco shakes his head and finally looks up. “No, I, erm. It’s just a lot of information.”

“Am I overwhelming you? I’m sorry,” Hadrian says, and Draco thinks there is genuine concern on his face, in his slightly wrinkled brow. “Everything else can wait for another day, if you’re not up for it now. It’s okay if you don’t want to talk about more serious stuff now. It’s up to you.”

“No, we should, um, get it out of the way, I guess. I mean, since you made the time to talk we might as well use it. But, erm,” Draco says, then hesitates before making his request. He doesn’t want to annoy Hadrian or anything, but Hadrian always seems to want him to be honest about how he feels. “Would it be alright if we just wait a few minutes first? Just so I can have time to process what you’ve already told me?”

“Of course, darling. Whatever you want,” Hadrian says, and gives him a warm, fond smile that makes Draco melt a little. “I can hold your hand if you like, or pet your hair. Or we could play a game. I could grab cards or a chess board for us to use before we continue.”

“Chess sounds good,” Draco says with a small smile of his own.

Hadrian nods and gets up from his chair. “Chess it is, then. I should warn you, though, I’m pants at it.”

Hadrian is, in fact, pretty terrible at chess. Draco beats him twice quickly, and it helps him relax enough after their earlier conversation that he feels ready for the rest of it.

“Okay,” is Hadrian’s response when Draco says as much. “I think this next part might be more, er, —overwhelming? emotional?— than the first part was. Sirius certainly freaked out when he read my Magical Signature test.”

“You want me to read your Magical Signature test?” Draco asks, somehow surprised by this even after Hadrian had him read the Inheritance test. “Those are even more private than Inheritance tests.”

“I know, but again, you’re my mate. I don’t want to keep secrets from you if I don’t have to. I will never be one of those doms that demands you listen to me without telling you what’s really going on or why. I want us to be partners, and that starts with me being honest with you,” Hadrian says, holding eye contact with Draco as he does so, as if to show his sincerity. “Just, maybe try not to freak out? You can stop reading any time you need to.”

“Okay,” Draco agrees, and then Hadrian is handing him another piece of parchment. Draco skims through the personal information, not as surprised by Hadrian’s dark core as he would have been a few weeks ago, especially given his dark creature. It is rare, but not unheard of, for a person’s core and creature to be on opposing sides of the magical spectrum. He is impressed by the natural abilities listed, though with so many family lines it makes sense because most older family lines have a special ability or two that runs through them. He reads through the list of compulsions that were on his mate and has to stop when he reaches the one about himself, closing his eyes and clenching his fists even though he’s probably wrinkling the parchment. He’ll worry about that later. Right now he’s processing the revelation that it was never *Hadrian* that hated him. It- It’s a lot to take in. “These have been

removed, right?" he asks, not opening his eyes.

"All of them are gone. There aren't even traces left, I had the goblins double-check. Many of them were wearing off as my inheritance came in, though," Hadrian says, and Draco finally looks up at him. The dominant's green eyes are watching him with concern.

"And the one about me?" Draco asks, almost not wanting to know the answer.

"My creature was fighting it the hardest. It was the most worn away at by the time the goblins removed everything after my inheritance," Hadrian explains, and Draco feels relieved, though he doesn't know why.

"Alright," is all he says as he goes back to reading. When he sees that there is a love potion listed, Draco feels boiling rage bubble up inside of him, and it only grows when he reads about the blocks. No wonder Hadrian can use wandless, wordless magic so effortlessly now if he's been working with only 75% of his core his whole life, not to mention that a natural affinity for mind magics often brings an affinity for nonverbal magic.

Hadrian watches as Draco's face contorts in true anger like he hasn't seen on the boy before. He thought he'd seen Draco angry, back when they would fight at school, but that was nothing compared to this. He can feel the thick aura radiate off of Draco and wrap protectively around him. The sclera and pupil in the blond's eyes disappear leaving only a blue that is brighter than his usual eye colour. His lips get a blue tint to them. Hadrian offhandedly wonders what his full transformation will look like. It takes about a year after inheriting for most wizards to be able to access a full creature transformation, but little things like eyes often come in pretty quickly and show up when the wizard feels especially strong emotions.

Hadrian notices Narcissa stand up from her chair across the room and quickly decides that he needs to calm Draco down before she can accuse Hadrian of causing Draco distress and take him away. Seeing his submissive angry and upset sets off so many of Hadrian's instincts to protect and take care of the sub, so Hadrian feels like he knows exactly what he should do.

Hadrian stands from his chair but almost immediately lowers himself to the ground so he's kneeling in front of Draco, putting himself lower than the other boy. "Darling," he says, his voice low and soft. "It's

okay. I'm okay, and I'm right here, and the things on that parchment can't hurt me anymore." When his words don't garter any reaction, Hadrian reaches forward to gently pry one of Draco's hands away from the parchment, holding it between both of his own while letting out a low, soothing rumble from deep in his chest. He continues rumbling while rubbing Draco's hand until the submissive's transformation fades away, his eyes returning to their normal shade of blue surrounded by white. Then he starts talking again. "It's okay. I'm here," he murmurs over and over until Draco makes eye contact with him again.

"A love potion," the blond whispers eventually and, shit, Hadrian should have known that would upset him.

"It's gone," he immediately assures. "It's gone, and nothing ever happened while I was affected by it. I'm all yours, always, even before we knew it. I swear."

"Mine?" the word comes out in a whisper, sounding horribly small and insecure. Hadrian thinks Draco must be tired out from his anger-induced partial transformation to not hide his insecurities at all.

"Yours," Hadrian confirms, soft and gentle. "Would you like a hug?"

Draco nods, so Hadrian stands and pulls the other boy up and into his arms. Narcissa is watching them from a few feet away, inside the anti-eavesdropping charm, and Hadrian meets her eyes over Draco's shoulder. He won't let her interfere, not when Draco is clinging to him like his life depends on it, even if she is the blond's mother. She's going to have to get used to the fact that Hadrian will be the one taking care of Draco before too long. After a moment she offers him a small nod and steps back. Good.

Draco is nuzzling into Hadrian's neck, scenting him in a way they haven't been able to do very much. With how Draco relaxes at the mingling of their scents, Hadrian makes a mental note to scent him more, even if only on their wrists. He noses above Draco's ear, using one hand to card through Draco's hair and the other to hold him tight, as he murmurs reassurances soft enough that even Sirius' enhanced hearing won't be able to pick up on them now that he's dropped the anti-eavesdropping charm. "I've got you. I'm here, and I'm yours. Always. I swear. I'm here, love."

Chapter End Notes

Let me know what you think. Do you like the chapter? Do Draco's

reactions seem realistic/in character for how I write him? Are the boys suitably adorable together? Do you want more fluff? Less fluff and more plot? Are you still enjoying the story? Let me know!

Chapter 13

Chapter Notes

> Today is the one-year anniversary of when I first posted this fic (it's still the 31st where I am). I never expected to keep writing this when I first posted it, and I certainly didn't expect to stick with it for a year and still be going with the story. Thank you to everyone who encouraged me to keep writing at the beginning and everyone that has joined this journey along the way.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Remus knows to expect the Malfoys when he gets home from work for tea time. He gets off from work early today, luckily, so he can join his family and their guests for tea. Not that his cub's mate should ever be considered a guest, rather a member of the family, but with where they are in their courtship and mateship Remus knows that it is not yet time to refer to Draco as family, as a son-in-law.

He can tell as soon as he enters the games room that something happened to upset Draco because the young submissive is leaning against his dominant's side, clearly seeking comfort, as Hadrian cards a hand through his hair. Instead of going up to them, Remus goes to where his own dominant is sitting with Lady Malfoy. He leans down to kiss Sirius' cheek and receive a kiss on his own cheek in turn.

"What happened?" he murmurs quietly to his partner.

"Hadrian wanted to tell Draco about the tests today, remember?" Sirius says, just as softly.

Remus hums, nodding. "Yes, I imagine that would be quite overwhelming. I'll just go say 'hi,' then, hm?"

Sirius nods, squeezing his hand quickly before he moves away. As he walks toward the boys, Remus hears Narcissa say quietly, "You must be the only Black with a healthy Bond."

Sirius' voice is mild when he responds, but Remus knows it is a somewhat forced calm. "For now, perhaps. But our sons will surely increase that number."

Remus understands Sirius' frustration with Narcissa in all of this because Hadrian and Draco were drawn together by Lady Magic, but

he can also understand her worries as a parent. She'll get over it, he's sure. She won't have a choice. If she tries to keep the boys apart, her son will suffer for it, and she wouldn't let that happen.

"Good afternoon," he says gently when he's near the boys, after making sure Hadrian saw him. He doesn't need to startle a dominant that is likely feeling very protective of their emotionally vulnerable submissive, family or not.

Draco is clearly startled by his voice, jerking to sit upright, pulling him away from Hadrian. On his wrist, Remus can see the courting bracelet Hadrian told them he was going to present to his submissive. Hadrian, on the other hand, smiles and says warmly, "Welcome home, Remus."

"Lord-Consort Black," Draco says formally, moving as if to stand, but Remus waves him off.

"Please call me Remus outside of formal settings, Heir Malfoy," he says gently, smiling at the boy. "Welcome to our home."

The blond boy glances at Hadrian before he says softly, "Thank you. You may call me Draco."

Remus smiles at him, already fond of this boy regardless of how much of a little prick he was as a third year. He will not hold childhood arrogance or a pureblood mask against him. "Hadrian, why don't you go help Kreature bring the tea things up? I'll show Draco to the parlour."

"But Rem-" the boy begins, only to be cut off by a sharp look from Remus. He ducks his head and rises to do as he's told, squeezing Draco's hand before he leaves. Draco is looking at Remus in awe, probably because he gave a dominant an order and the dom actually followed it. He'll learn to do the same in time. It's all about confidence, really.

"Now, Draco," Remus says, keeping his voice soft as he sits in an armchair across from the boy, "I know you've likely already had an overwhelming day with everything Hadrian wanted to talk to you about, but I was hoping to get the chance to speak with you?"

Draco's mind races as he watches his mate's godfather sitting in front of him, wondering if he's done something to upset the other man, or if he's going to threaten him like Draco's father did with Hadrian when they first found out they are destined mates. He isn't prepared for any

of the reasons he can think of that one of his mate's godfathers would want to talk to him alone. He swallows nervously but nods, trying to keep an outwardly calm appearance.

"I'm assuming you don't have many, if any, older submissives in your life that you could go to with questions or to talk about your experiences with?" the man asks, and he sounds gentle and kind, but Draco is now scared of this conversation for a whole different reason.

He really doesn't want to have a 'how submissives should behave' discussion or a talk about what he should expect *physically* as the bond progresses or anything like that with anyone, but especially not with his mate's godfather. He tries to keep his unease off of his face and out of his voice, though, as he says, "No, sir." He keeps his voice quiet and respectful, trying to be as inoffensive as possible. He really doesn't need to do anything to make his (hopefully) future father-in-law dislike him.

"I didn't think so. I just want to make sure you know that if you need to talk about anything, you can talk to me. If you have any questions or want to talk about what you're feeling or want to hear about my own experiences, I'm here. And I swear that if you do talk to me, I won't tell anyone what you say. I won't tell your dominant or even my own. Submissives look out for each other, okay?" Remus says, and he sounds so *sincere* , but Draco just can't trust it. No matter what he says, he's still Hadrian's godfather. "And before you go back to school we'll talk about what to expect going forward, okay?"

Draco's face *burns,* and he knows that it's extremely visible on his pale skin, but he can't help it. He is *really* not looking forward to that conversation. The normal puberty talk before he started Hogwarts was bad enough, and now he's going to have to talk about submission and bonding and probably sex with someone he barely knows? He'd rather not, thank you very much. He can't find it in himself to respond, but luckily, Remus doesn't seem to expect him to.

"Here," the older man says, handing Draco a glass. The boy has no idea where it came from. "Drink some water and take a moment to compose yourself before we go join the others." Draco nods and does as he's told, taking deep breaths and trying to put the promised future conversation out of his mind. There's no reason to worry about it now.

Lord Black and Narcissa are already in the parlour when Draco enters

with Remus. Narcissa is perched on an armchair, Lord Black is sat on a loveseat, and there is a small couch across from him which is unoccupied. Remus moves away from Draco as soon as they enter the room, heading toward Lord Black. Draco watches as the man kisses his dominant's cheek before sitting down next to him, their thighs and shoulders pressed together. Draco marvels at the ease they have with each other and longs for that same ease in his relationship with Hadrian someday. He rarely sees his parents show any kind of open affection for each other, and this kind of casual contact seems completely absent from their relationship in a way he hadn't noticed until now. Even at home with no one but him to see, they are reserved about their relationship, though he knows that they care for each other. He doesn't want the kind of relationship his parents have, though. He wants something more like what he is seeing from the Bonded pair in front of him.

Lord Black smiles at Draco and gestures for him to sit on the couch. "Hadrian should be here shortly, but please, make yourself comfortable in the meantime," he says, his voice easy and his accent less formal than Draco has heard him speak the last few times. More similar to how Remus speaks than his usual, pureblood accent. It throws Draco off for a moment, but he carefully does not let it show on his face or in his body language.

"Thank you, Lord Black," he says politely, dipping his head a little in respect as he does as he's told.

"Sirius, please," the older man says casually. "We're family, Draco. Or did you forget that your mother was born a Black?"

"Of course. Thank you, Sirius," Draco says, feeling off-put. Both of his mate's godfathers have insisted on given names now. Draco's mother has permission to use Hadrian's given name, but he does not use either of Draco's parents' given names. It feels weird that Draco should use his parents' given names, but he will do so since it is what they have asked for. He doesn't feel the need to extend permission for Sirius to use *his* given name seeing as he already did, and his lack of correction should imply the permission.

Draco feels awkward, sitting there with his mother and his mate's parents but without his mate. He's not sure how to act or if he's supposed to talk. No one is talking to him, though Sirius and his mother are talking quietly, Remus interjecting every once in a while. He keeps quiet, just sitting there awkwardly until Hadrian finally enters the room along with an ancient-looking house elf.

Remus is watching Draco out of the corner of his eye as he follows the conversation between Sirius and Narcissa, seeing how uncomfortable the boy is but knowing that nothing he says will make the boy more comfortable right now. He notices when Hadrian comes in because Draco's head turns toward the doorway, his posture straightening from where he was slightly slumped in on himself as if to make himself smaller. Well, that's certainly a good sign. Remus knows that his cub wouldn't be one of those arsehole doms that there are always horror stories about, but seeing the evidence that Draco is more comfortable with his dominant in the room is a good sign. Remus hasn't really gotten to see them interact yet. The only time he's been in the same room as them together since they found out they're mates was the negotiation meeting, and formal settings really don't let someone get a good read on relationships, not least of all because they weren't even sitting next to each other most of the time and they hadn't been on any dates yet at that point. Remus trusts his kid, but he'll keep an eye on them anyway to make sure they are both doing well.

Hadrian sets the tray he's carrying on the table, Kreature floating several more in behind him, then takes a seat next to Draco. There are a few inches of space between them everywhere, so that they won't touch even if they shift around a little. "Shall I pour the tea?" Hadrian asks, looking at Sirius and Remus equally for an answer. Hadrian has never looked at Remus as less of an authority figure just because he's a submissive, even subconsciously. From the outside perspective, it might seem like Sirius is the head of the household, but in reality, Remus is just as likely to have the final say in everyday matters as Sirius is, if not more so, and Hadrian understands that. Remus actually thinks that Hadrian subconsciously thinks that the submissive in a Bond should have more say in the home from watching Remus and Sirius over the last year or so, but that's neither here nor there. He and Draco will figure out their own balance when the time comes.

"Why don't you pour the tea for the two of you, and I'll pour for us adults?" Remus suggests, knowing that Hadrian will like feeling like he's providing for his submissive, even if it is something as small as tea.

Hadrian nods, sending Remus a small smile. Remus lets the boy pour two cups first before taking the pot to pour the remaining three. He hears Hadrian murmur, "Two scoops of sugar and a splash of milk, right?"

Draco nods, and even from the corner of his eye Remus can see the

surprise on his face as he blinks. “How did you know that? I don’t remember telling you,” the blond asks just as quietly.

Hadrian shrugs, handing the cup over before fixing his own with about twice as much milk as he put in Draco’s. “I pay attention. That’s how you made it when we had tea with Blaise.” Remus has to resist the urge to smirk both at Hadrian’s statement and the blush that spreads across Draco’s face. In his experience, dominants tend to be almost hyperaware of their submissives any time they are in the vicinity even when they’re not actively trying to. Sirius had always been observant of Remus when they were young, even before the former came into his early inheritance, but when they started their mateship Sirius started noticing the smallest things about the werewolf, things that Remus himself hadn’t even noticed before. Draco will get used to it, though. He will always take up a decent portion of Hadrian’s attention whether they are together or not, and Remus is sure he’ll enjoy it once the two of them are settled into their mateship more. Submissives are wired to desire and bask in the attention, after all.

Soon they are all holding tea cups and sipping at them quietly. Hadrian places his hand between him and Draco, palm up, and Draco gratefully puts his own in it, glad for the contact.

“So, Draco,” Sirius breaks the silence, his tone surprisingly warm, “what do you like to do when you’re not in school?”

Draco glances at Hadrian, seeking, well, he doesn’t really know what. Reassurance, maybe? Hadrian is already looking at him already, eyes and face soft, and Draco finds comfort in that. He looks back at Sirius and says, “Well, I quite like quidditch, especially when we’re playing against Gryffindor. Playing against Hadrian is always a nice challenge.” That seems to be a good answer, luckily, because everyone smiles.

“I played when I was at Hogwarts too, you know?” Sirius says. “I was a beater, and Hade’s dad was a chaser. We won the Quidditch Cup one year, even.”

Draco smiles, glad to have something he can relate to Sirius on. “I’ve only gotten to play a season and a half, but the one year there *was* a winner it was Gryffindor. Maybe this year I’ll actually be able to beat Hadrian in a match,” Draco says, glancing at Hadrian with a smile pulling at his lips. Hadrian returns the look with a grin.

“We’ll have to see about that. I certainly won’t make it easy for you,” Hadrian says, though Draco can tell he’s more teasing than competitive. “Maybe we can play some seeker’s matches to practice.”

“I’d like that,” Draco says honestly, feeling warm inside. “We’ll have to get Blaise to chaperone. I’d say he could referee, but he really couldn’t. Blaise is so uninterested in Quidditch that I can barely get him to go to my games.”

“I was the same when we were in school,” Remus says, “Until he made the team in our sixth year, Siri had to drag me to games, even when James was playing.”

Draco laughs lightly along with everyone else, feeling much more comfortable than before. They talk over tea for almost an hour, keeping to light topics, and by the time Draco and his mother leave that afternoon, he’s feeling much more comfortable with his mate’s parents than he thought he could.

Chapter End Notes

> Did you notice that this chapter is written entirely from the perspective of the two submissive characters?
> What did you think of the Wolfstar backstory and look into their dynamic?
>
> Okay, now the important one: as we are getting closer to the boys eventually going back to school, I am still deciding how I want to treat certain characters. I would love it if you would each tell me how you would like to see Ron, Hermione, and Ginny portrayed. For each of them, would you like them to be: complacent in Dumbledore's schemes or ignorant/manipulated; bashing or redemption? Please let me know if you have any kind of opinion at all, even if it's for only one character. Your answers for each can be different.

Chapter 14

Chapter Notes

> Thank you for everyone who commented and voted on the last chapter. I have logged all of the votes, and it looks like people want a manipulated Hermione who gets redeemed, and don't want Ginny redeemed. Ron was mixed enough that I'm classifying him as somewhere in the middle in terms of y'all's opinions. Not sure exactly what I'll do with each of their characters yet, but your votes and comments have given me some *ideas.*

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“Blaise!” Draco bemoans, flopping onto the couch next to the other boy. Blaise watches, amused, holding back a laugh at his best friend’s dramatics. He scoots closer to the blond, gently lifting his head and depositing it in his own lap. Draco blinks up at him, seeming surprised. “Um, I’m not sure- I’m not sure we should do this anymore.”

Blaise stares at him for a long moment, then says, “I don’t see why not.” Draco opens his mouth, but Blaise shushes him by running a hand through his hair. “I doubt Hadrian would care. Yes, he’s protective, but he doesn’t seem to mind how close we are.”

“I just- I don’t want to risk it,” Draco says in a quiet voice.

“Then you can ask if it’s okay next time you see him, and if it’s not, you don’t have to tell him about this time,” Blaise says both to reassure the blond and because he thinks that Hadrian will be fine with the two of them being somewhat tactile.

“I don’t know, Blaise. What if he gets upset with me just for asking?” Draco says, and Blaise often forgets how insecure Draco can be because he does so well at hiding it much of the time.

Blaise sighs softly, then says, “Since you found out you’re mates, has he ever once gotten upset with you for asking a question? Or for anything you have said or done?” Draco shakes his head, but won’t meet Blaise’s eyes. “Well, I doubt this would be what changed that. But if you really don’t want to ask, I can bring it up next time I chaperone for you. I’ll even make it sound like you wouldn’t allow our normal level of contact because you didn’t want to upset him, if you

like."

"I would appreciate you asking instead. You don't have to imply something untrue, though. I don't *want* to hide things from him or lie. I want to be able to tell him everything," Draco says.

"I'm sure you'll get there," Blaise smiles down at him. "Now, what were you bemoaning about when you came in?"

"He's just- He's too perfect, Blaise. There's no way it's real. He has to be hiding something," Draco says, looking up at him with wide, pleading eyes, though pleading for what, Blaise isn't quite sure.

Blaise suppresses a fond, amused smile as he replies calmly, "Oh? And why is that?"

"He showed me his tests, Blaise. His Inheritance and Magical Signature Tests, he let me read them. Asked me to, even, in the name of being honest with me," Draco says. "And he's so patient and caring and he always gives me what I need if he can figure out what that is, even if that means asking me. He gives me options and tries to make me comfortable, and he's just- He's too understanding, too willing to change his plans for me. There has to be a downside."

Blaise tilts his head slightly, studying Draco's face closely. All of that does sound pretty good, actually. It seems that Potter is treating his friend right so far. Still, "Why do think there has to be something bad? Why can't he just be a good mate?"

"Because that's not how it works. Dominants are supposed to be controlling and care more for their own wants than their submissive's needs. Just look at my Aunt Bella and others like her. And sure, that's an extreme case, but this is too much. There's no way he's actually this good," Draco explains.

Blaise can see where he's coming from, but mates exist for a reason. Sure, there are plenty of horror stories, but the fact that those are the first things Draco thinks of is worrying. Instead of voicing these thoughts, he says, "What's too much, bello?"

"Everything," Draco says. Blaise gives him a look when that seems to be his entire answer, and after a pause, he continues, "He wants me to keep my heirship, for one. Talked to my father about it and everything. I would be the only submissive to hold a family's title in a long time, and he says he'll let me have that. Let me be the head of my family and have my own power in both the Malfoy family and the

Wizengamot. Then, he asked me to read his tests, saying that I have a right to know since we'll be spending the rest of our lives together. He actually said that — *the rest of our lives* ." Draco pauses after this, and Blaise thinks he might be done, but before the older boy can decide to speak, Draco opens his mouth again. His voice is quieter when he continues, "He, erm. He gave me a courting bracelet from one of the families he's the Lord of. It has protection magic on it, of course, but really, it shows the rest of the Wizarding World that I'm taken. It's like he's staking his claim on me, and it makes me feel all warm and happy inside, even if it's not the type of permanent claim that my creature really desires."

"He gave you a courting bracelet?" Blaise asks, his voice louder than he meant it to be in his surprise. That is a big step, especially considering that they are technically still in the first phase of courtship, often thought of as a sort of trial phase, when the courtship is the easiest to dissolve.

"Oh, er, yeah. Would you like to see it?" Draco asks, and his voice is quiet, but there's an underlying note of happiness as he speaks, which Blaise is glad to hear. He should be happy about this.

"Of course, I want to see it! That's great, Draco," Blaise says, and Draco smiles up at him.

"Yeah, it is pretty great. Still hard to believe, though," Draco says, sitting up.

Blaise pouts at him for the loss of contact, but it is quickly forgotten as Draco pulls up his sleeve to reveal an intricately carved band of silver around his left wrist, set with rubies and a few obsidian stones. It's beautiful, but more importantly, "That's an official Lord's courting bracelet, isn't it?"

Draco nods. "Yeah, it is," he says. "Isn't it beautiful? I can still hardly believe he actually gave it to me." There's a smile on his face as he gazes at the bracelet, and it warms Blaise's heart to see that.

"It is very beautiful," Bkaise says, looping his arm around Draco's shoulder to pull him in closer. "Now, what else has been going on with you two?"

"We had tea with his godfathers yesterday; and mother, of course, as she was chaperoning. It wasn't too bad. It was pretty nice, actually. They're nice, and they don't seem upset that I'm their son's mate," Draco says, and he doesn't seem *happy* , per say, but he doesn't seem

upset or weary either, so Blaise doesn't think it's a bad thing. A partner's parents are always a bit scary, whether they are your mate or just a boyfriend or girlfriend, so it's understandable. "Although, one of his godfathers wants to talk to me about, erm, what it means to be a submissive, I guess."

Blaise raises an eyebrow. "Oh?" he says. That surprises him. What would some random man know about that?

"Oh, right. I should probably mention that his godparents are a mated pair," Draco says.

"And it's the submissive one that wants to talk to you?" Blaise asks. He doesn't know anything about Hadrian's family other than that he lives with his godfathers, but didn't grow up with them.

"Yeah."

"How are you feeling about that?" Blaise asks.

Draco shrugs, and says, "I don't know. Nervous. I don't know exactly what he wants to talk about, but I'm sure it won't be fun."

"No use worrying about it, I suppose. You won't know until it happens," Blaise points out. He isn't sure what else he can say to make Draco less nervous. Draco shrugs but doesn't argue. "He's treating you well, though? Hadrian, that is."

"Yeah," Draco ducks his head, his cheeks coloring. "He's a perfect gentleman. Well, more tactile, but you know what I mean. He never even hints at going against the restrictions in our contract, even though sometimes I want him to. And he's so understanding of my emotional needs. He's just about perfect, Blaise."

"Oh? And what restrictions are you wanting him to break?" Blaise teases, proud when Draco's cheeks turn a darker shade of red.

The blond groans and shoves his shoulder. "You're insufferable." Blaise simply raises an eyebrow, not responding. "Fine. I might, sometimes, think I want him to kiss me. And that it might be nice to be alone with him, without someone always watching us."

"It sounds like you're ready for the next stage of courtship," Blaise says. He won't make fun of Draco for his desires, which are all perfectly understandable and part of the reason Blaise doesn't plan on entering into a formal courtship anytime soon. Normal dating will

work just fine for him, thank-you-very-much.

“It’s only been a week and a half and a handful of outings, most of them not even real dates!” Draco protests.

“True, but you’re also not a normal courting couple. You’re mates,” Blaise points out. “You should at least renegotiate before Hogwarts starts. The first few weeks usually make people change their minds about what perameters and restrictions they want, and once we’re at school, renegotiating will be a pain. You’d likely have to wait until the winter holidays at that point.”

“Yeah, okay. I’ll bring it up to my parents,” Draco says. “And for the record, I look forward to when you get a boyfriend or girlfriend so I can repay the teasing.”

Blaise moans dramatically, but really, he’s not worried. If teasing him will make Draco happy, then he won’t mind it. At this point, he just wants to see his friend happy, and is hoping that Hadrian Fucking Potter can make that happen.

Chapter End Notes

> This is gonna be my last chapter until at least December. I know it's been a while, but it will be a while again, so please be patient. I'm glad I was able to get this chapter out to you before November, but once November starts, I am officially not going to let myself work on anything but my NaNoWriMo project. This is my first year participating, so I hope all of you will wish me luck, and I will hopefully see you in December or January.
>
> As always, let me know what you think of the new chapter!
>
> Non-Archive users: if you want me to let you know when I post by responding to your comment, please put "let me know when there's an update" or something similar, and I won't respond until I post the next chapter.

End Notes

Comments = reminding me that this exists and y'all want more = me being more likely to write this instead of starting new projects/working on other things.
I'm always happy to receive comments from readers, they keep me writing. Let me know if there are things you'd like to see in the future, what you like from the story, what stands out to you, or if you have any questions (I won't answer them if they give away future plot points, but I still like seeing them).

Please drop by the Archive and comment to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!